

MUNSEYS MAGAZINE

Vol. LIII No. IV

January 1915



GERMANY

Her Empire and Her Empire-Builders
From the Earliest Times Until To-day

By George F. Brett

A

CHRONIC din of battles, amid which the forces of civilization did their work to mighty purpose—such is the story of Germany from the first appearance of the German race in the twilight of the pre-Christian era until to-day. All down that long road the sword of Germania has been kept bright, and wielded by a strong and dominant race.

The first known victory for German

arms was recorded in the year 113 before the Christian era, when the Roman consul Papirius Carbo was defeated by the Cimbri and the Teutones in Styria, now an Austrian province. Twelve years later, however, this triumph was followed by a crushing defeat administered at the hands of the famous Caius Marius, who almost exterminated the invaders from the north. Marius's still more famous nephew, Julius Cæsar, successfully pit-



THE REICHSTAGSGEBÄUDE, OR HALL OF THE IMPERIAL DIET, IN BERLIN—BEFORE THE ENTRANCE STANDS THE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO BISMARCK, BY REINHOLD BEGAS

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ted Roman might and skill against the warlike virtues of other German tribes—the Triboci, Nemetes, and Vangiones—at the opening of his campaigns in Gaul in the year 58 B.C.

From that time until the ninth year of the Chris-

Arminius's victory was one of the epoch-making battles of history, a salient landmark in the current of the races. It forced the Roman invader back to the Rhine, and decided that Germany should be Teutonic and not Latin. Germanicus, five years later, made a brilliant attempt to retrieve the disaster of Teutoburg, but the German sword proved mightier than



THE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM I, THE FIRST SOVEREIGN OF THE MODERN GERMAN EMPIRE—THIS MONUMENT, THE MOST IMPOSING IN BERLIN, WAS DESIGNED BY REINHOLD BEGAS

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tian age the struggle between imperial Rome, the mistress of the world, and the fair-haired, ruddy-faced barbarians who went into battle with loud cries, continued with varying advantage to the Romans. In that year, however—a period famed in German legend—three picked legions under the Roman general Varus were annihilated by Arminius, chieftain of the Cherusci, in the forest of Teutoburg, near the modern town of Detmold.

the Roman spear. The Emperor Tiberius abandoned the attempt to achieve the conquest of the Germans, and from his time no Roman army ventured beyond the Rhine.

Indeed, in the second and third centuries there were times when Rome found herself hard pressed by the tide of Germanic peoples pushed westward by the Hunnish wave which swept in from Asia. Chief among the aggressive tribes were the



THE PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN, ORIGINALLY THE PALACE OF PRINCE HENRY, BROTHER OF FREDERICK THE GREAT—IN FRONT ARE STATUES OF HELMHOLTZ, TREITSCHKE, AND OTHERS



THE BRANDENBURG GATE, WHICH FORMS THE ENTRANCE TO THE CENTRAL PORTION OF BERLIN FROM THE GREAT PARK OF THE TIERGARTEN—IT WAS BUILT IN 1789-1793, AND IS AN IMITATION OF THE PROPYLÆA AT ATHENS

Alemanni and the Franks, and close upon their heels, in the fourth and fifth centuries, came Vandals, Suevi, Heruli, Goths, and Longobards.

The climax in the struggle came with the taking of Rome itself by Alaric and his Goths in 410. In one sense the conquest of Rome was a triumph for the Germans; in another sense it proved a crushing misfortune for them and for all western civilization; for when Rome fell the light of the

world went out, and the torch was destined not to be relighted for centuries to come.

From the fall of Rome to the real beginning of the history of Germany—the Germany which is racially, and to some extent geographically, identical with the German empire of to-day—is a stretch of more than three hundred and fifty years of turmoil, out of which the light of Christianity gleams forth with increasing power. It was an English monk, Boniface, coworker of another Englishman, Willibrod, who brought the teachings of the new faith to the Thuringians, the Bavarians, and other tribes.

In the interval, initial attempts at imperial unification had been made by Odoacer, lord of the Heruli, and his successor, Theodoric, the East Goth, who founded upon the ruins of the great Hunnish kingdom of Attila a dominion extending from Rome to the land of the Bavarians. Then came the Merovingian dynasty of the Franks, who were destined not only to put an end to Roman rule in Gaul, but to advance the day of the welding of the Germans into a nation.

It was Clovis, the grandson of Merovæus, founder of the Merovingian line, who dealt the death-blow to the Roman power in Gaul at the battle of Soissons, in 486. Turning his hand to the task of consolidating the Germans, he subdued the Alemanni, annexed part of their territory, and gave the name of Franconia to that part of Alemannia in the region of the Neckar and the Main.

Clovis's capital was Paris—a Germanic Paris, strongly leavened by the Roman civilization which had preceded the Franks. At his death the work of unification came to a standstill; for his four sons became involved in bitter rivalries, and the great kingdom was divided administratively into four parts. Eventually the various elements ranged themselves into two main divisions—the eastern, called Austrasia, and the western, designated as Neustria.

In the wars which ac-

THE STATUE OF FREDERICK THE GREAT, BY RAUCH (1851), WHICH STANDS AT THE EAST END OF BERLIN'S FAMOUS STREET, UNTER DEN LINDEN





THE SCHLOSS, OR ROYAL PALACE, THE GERMAN EMPEROR'S RESIDENCE IN BERLIN, A BUILDING WHOSE OLDEST PORTION DATES FROM 1443—ON THE RIGHT APPEARS PART OF THE MONUMENT TO WILLIAM I

accompanied this process of crystallization by violence, the feudal system, which was to prove a heavy drag upon the progress of Germany, began to develop as a result of vast land-grants to successful military

But a new force was rising out of the confusion. Pippin of Heristal, the son of one of the usurping majordomos, demonstrated at the battle of Testry, in 687, the supremacy of the Austrasian Franks, and



THE GENDARMEN MARKT AND SCHILLER PLATZ, ONE OF THE FINEST SQUARES IN BERLIN, WITH THE FRENCH CHURCH (LEFT), THE ROYAL THEATER (CENTER, IN THE BACKGROUND), AND THE NEUE KIRCHE, OR NEW CHURCH (RIGHT)

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leaders. The royal authority sank into contempt during a hundred and fifty years of internecine strife. The majordomos—the “mayors” of the Merovingian palace—gradually absorbed the royal prerogatives. United Germany seemed far off.

began the process of subduing the dukes whose power had been growing during the interval of Merovingian impotence. After Pippin came the Arabic invasion, met by his son Charles Martel, one of the decisive figures in history. It was Charles Martel



THE SCHAUSPIELHAUS, OR ROYAL THEATER, BERLIN, A HANDSOME BUILDING DESIGNED BY SCHINKEL AND ERECTED IN 1819-1821—THIS IS A SUBSIDIZED INSTITUTION FOR CLASSICAL AND MODERN PLAYS



THE NATIONAL GALLERY, BERLIN, A FINE CLASSICAL BUILDING DESIGNED BY STÜLER AND ERECTED IN 1866-1876—ABOVE THE STEPS IS AN EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF KING FREDERICK WILLIAM IV, BY CALANDRELLI (1886)



THE STADTSCHLOSS, OR TOWN PALACE, POTSDAM, ONE OF SEVERAL ROYAL PALACES IN THIS PICTURESQUE TOWN, WHICH IS TO BERLIN WHAT VERSAILLES IS TO PARIS

—Charles the Hammer—who, at the battle of Poitiers, in 732, broke the crest of the Arabic wave and decreed by the sword that Europe should be Christian and not Moslem.

It remained for Pippin the Short, son of Charles Martel, and first king of the Carolingian line, to take up in good earnest the task of removing one of the great barriers to the unification of the German world by subduing the formidable tribe of the Saxons. Conquerors of the northern half of Thuringia, the Saxons proved a problem too difficult for solution by Pippin; but a new figure—an epochal personality who was to accomplish this task—already stood upon the threshold of events.

Charlemagne—Charles the Great—was the first great constructive force of the Middle Ages. A son of Pippin the Short, in 771, on the death of his brother Carloman, he found himself sole occupant of the throne. He overran Thuringia, overawed the Saxons by an overwhelming display of power, including the summary execution of four thousand prisoners, and finally

broke down their opposition. After that he turned his attention to the recalcitrant Bavarians, and forced them to submission. Then he struck mighty blows at the Avars, a rapacious horde of Asiatic warriors, new to Europe, who were pressing against the borders of western Christendom. With unvarying success he also challenged the advance of the Czechs and other Slavic tribes in northeastern Europe, and established his authority as far as the Baltic.

On Christmas Day of the year 800 Charlemagne impressed himself deeply upon the imagination of Christendom, and opened a long chapter of history, by having himself crowned as Roman emperor in the Eternal City. The vast political organism to which, by this act, he gave definite form was destined to play an important part in the life of the German people and of the world for more than a thousand years.

The forces of disintegration largely undid Charlemagne's work of unification under the great emperor's grandsons. After a period of internecine fighting, these princes divided the empire among them-

selves by the treaty of Verdun, which was signed in 843. Lothaire, together with the title of emperor, obtained his grandfather's Italian provinces, and with them a wide strip running to the North Sea through the valleys of the Rhine and the Rhône—a dominion designated as Lotharingia or Lorraine. His brother, Louis the German, received the territory east of the Rhine, with the districts of Mayence, Worms, and

Spires on the left bank of that river. To Charles fell most of the western region of the empire, now known as France.

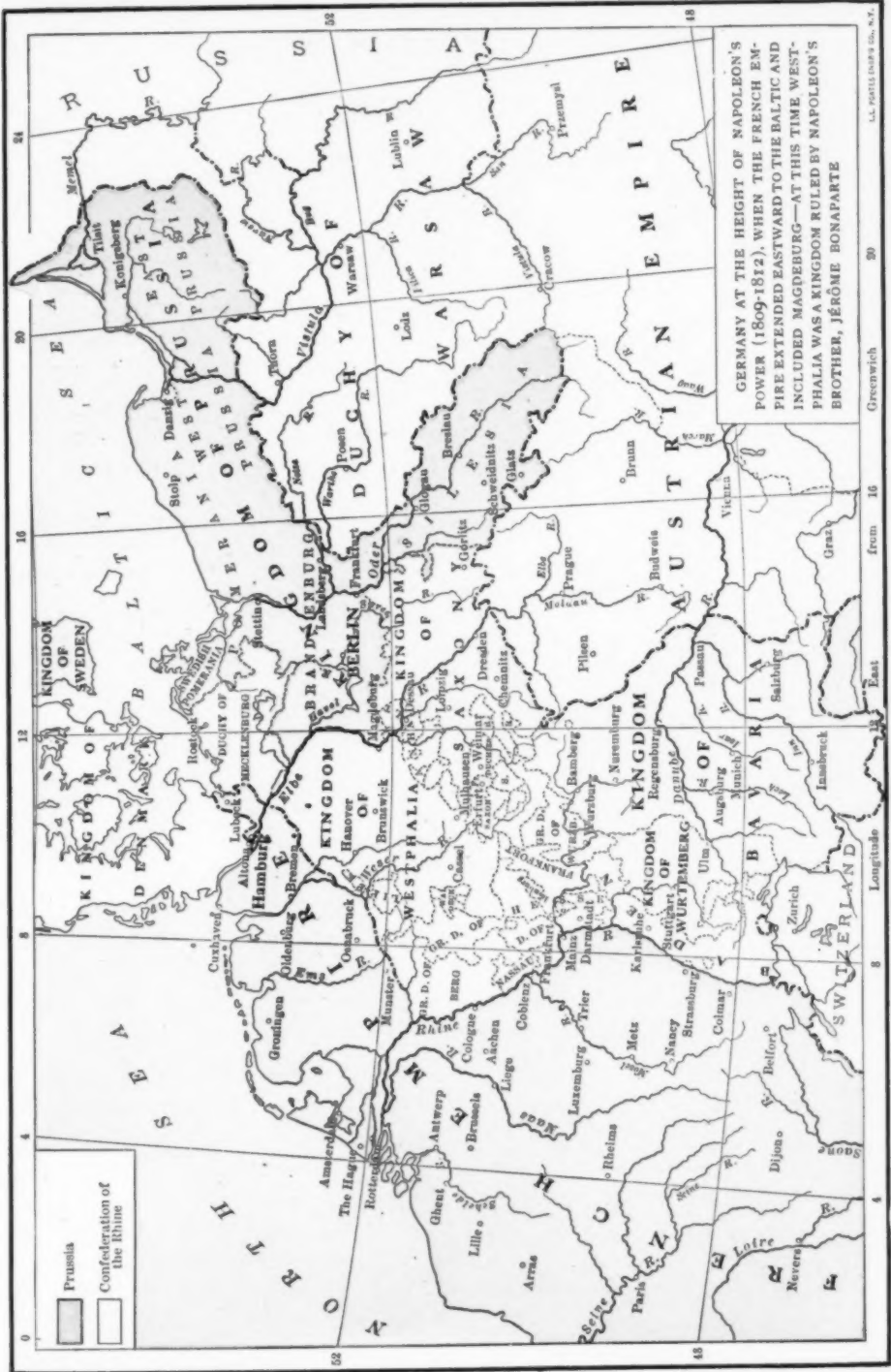
This division marked the final separation of Germany and France, and created two constantly diverging nations, whose relations in future ages were destined to produce results momentous for both.

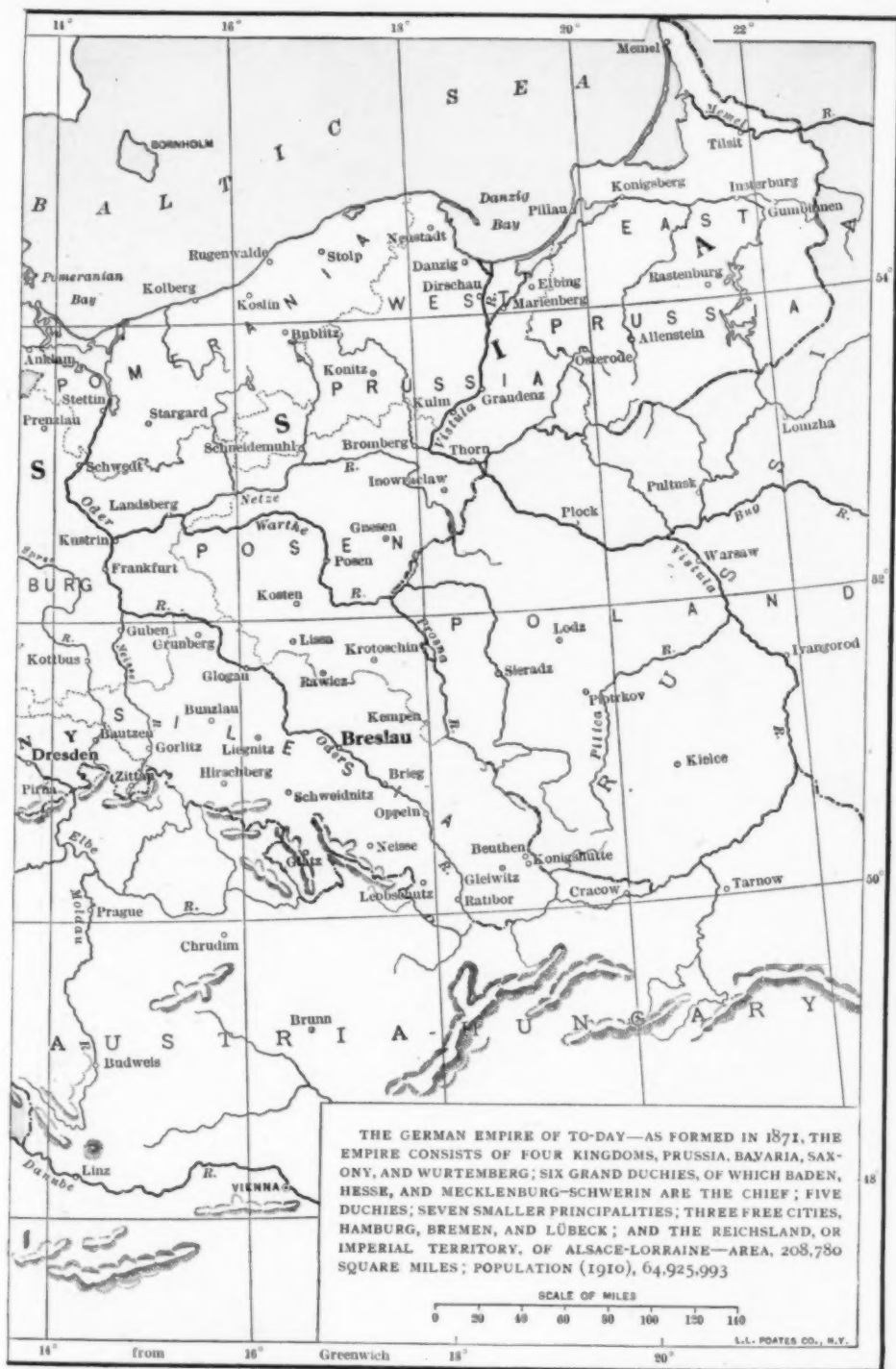
During the reign of Louis the German (843-876) and his immediate successors of

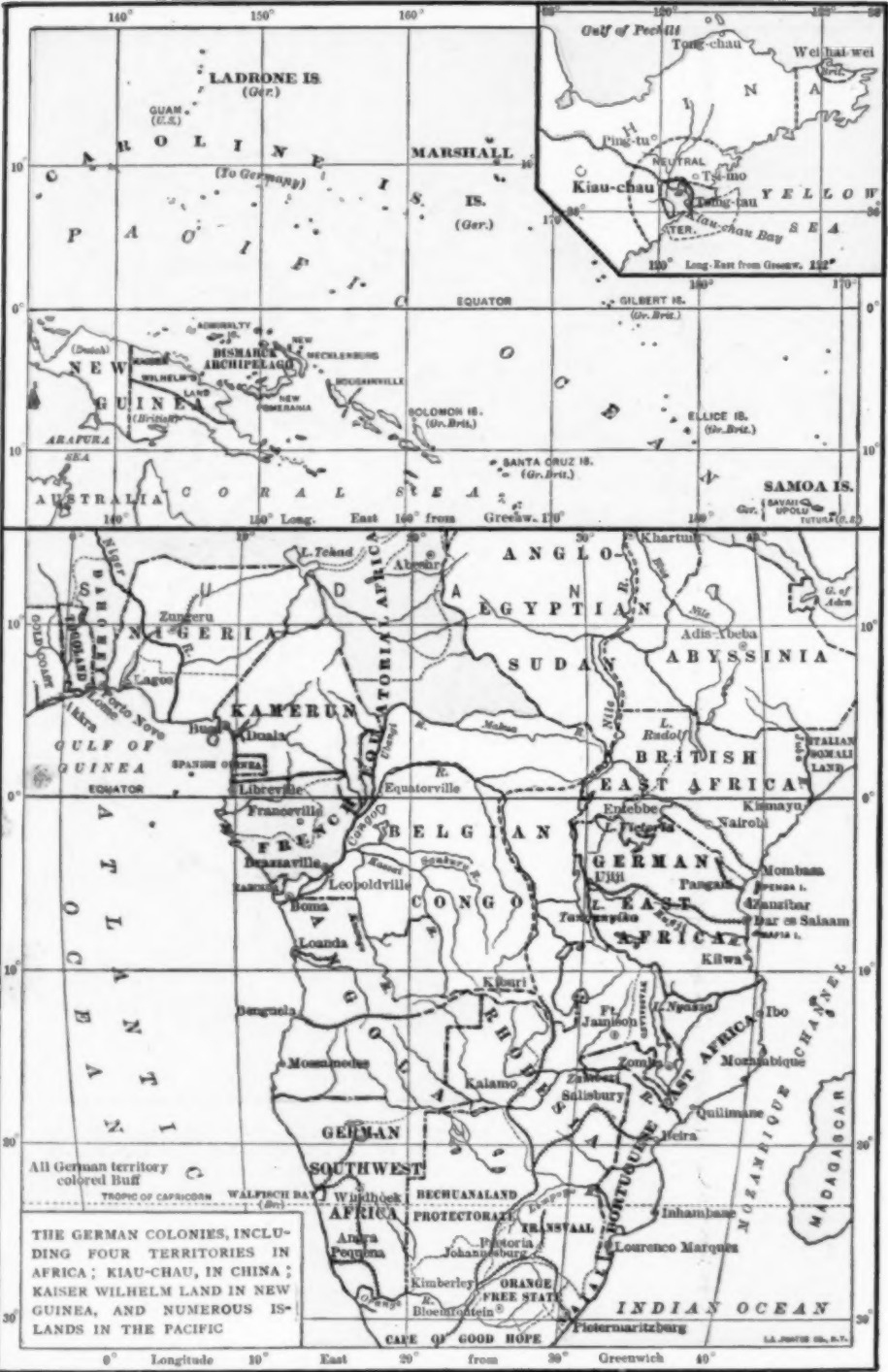


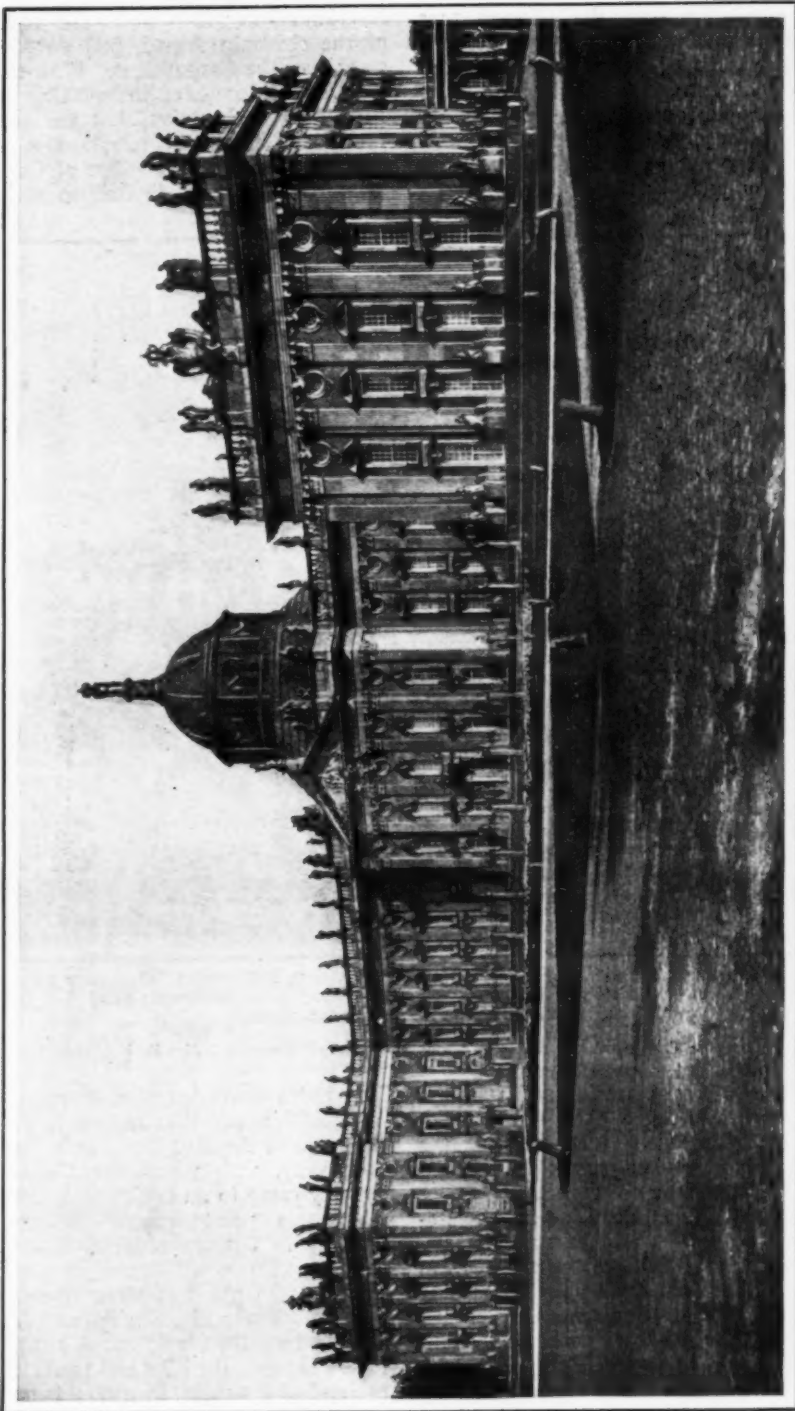
GERMANY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA, SHOWING THE PROVINCES OF RAETIA, NORICUM, AND PANNONIA, ADDED TO THE ROMAN EMPIRE DURING THE REIGN OF AUGUSTUS, AND THE FRONTIER ALONG THE RHINE AND DANUBE, BY WHICH THE EMPIRE WAS BOUNDED AFTER THE DEFEAT OF VARUS, A.D. 9











THE NEUES PALAIS, OR NEW PALACE, POTSDAM, BUILT BY FREDERICK THE GREAT IN 1763-1769, AND NOW A FAVORITE IMPERIAL SUMMER RESIDENCE—THE EMPEROR FREDERICK III DIED HERE ON JUNE 15, 1888

the Carolingian line, the German race found itself involved in a struggle of which one phase is now being fought out in the border-lands between Austria and Germany on the one hand and Russia on the other—the age-long struggle with the Slavs. Louis vainly sought to crush the Moravians, who, under their great duke, Moimir,

Siberian origin which, under the leadership of the chieftain Arpad, had swept westward over the Carpathians. With Magyar aid, Arnulf succeeded in breaking up the Moravian-Czech union, but the separate Moravian state still remained a strong factor on the eastern borders of Germany. The Magyars, once invited to the west,



THE HOF THEATER, OR ROYAL OPERA-HOUSE, DRESDEN, A FINE AND RICHLY DECORATED MODERN BUILDING IN THE RENAISSANCE STYLE, DESIGNED BY GOTTFRIED AND MANFRED SEMPER, AND OPENED IN 1878

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

had established a powerful realm in the region that still bears their name. Co-operating with their first cousins, the Czechs, the Moravians successfully defied the German claim to suzerainty under their fighting kings, Rostislav and Sviatopluk.

Her eastern neighbors' pressure upon Germany increased during the succeeding period of history. Confronted by the rising power of the Moravian kings, Arnulf, who assumed the imperial crown in 887, resorted to the dangerous expedient of invoking the aid of the Magyars, a horde of

launched a campaign of massacre and pillage which reached its highest fury during the reign of Arnulf's son, Louis the Child (900-911), with whom the Carolingian dynasty came to an end in Germany.

At this point Saxony assumed the primacy in German affairs. The first of the Saxon line was Henry I, surnamed the Fowler, who put an end to the Magyar raids into Franconia, Swabia, and Bavaria, and subdued the Slavic tribes in the great region between the Elbe and the Oder. By the end of his reign, in 936, this energetic sovereign had united all the German lands

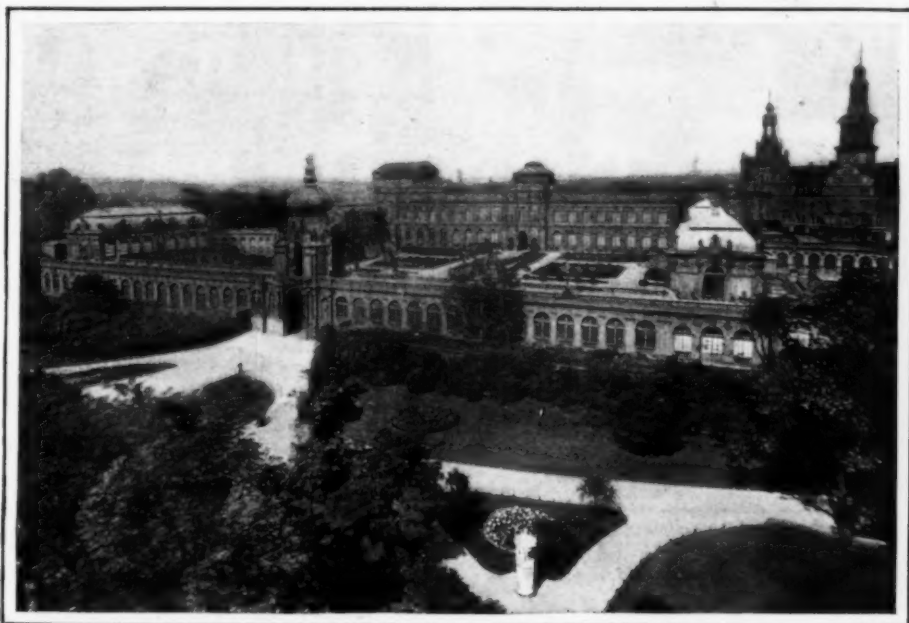


THE ALBRECHTSBURG, THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CASTLE THAT DOMINATES THE OLD SAXON TOWN OF MEISSEN, ON THE RIVER ELBE, NEAR DRESDEN—IN THIS BUILDING WAS FORMERLY THE ROYAL PORCELAIN-FACTORY MAKING THE WARE KNOWN AS DRESDEN CHINA

under his scepter, enforced peace among the nobles, and given a strong impetus to the development of northern Germany.

Under Otto I (936-973), the son of

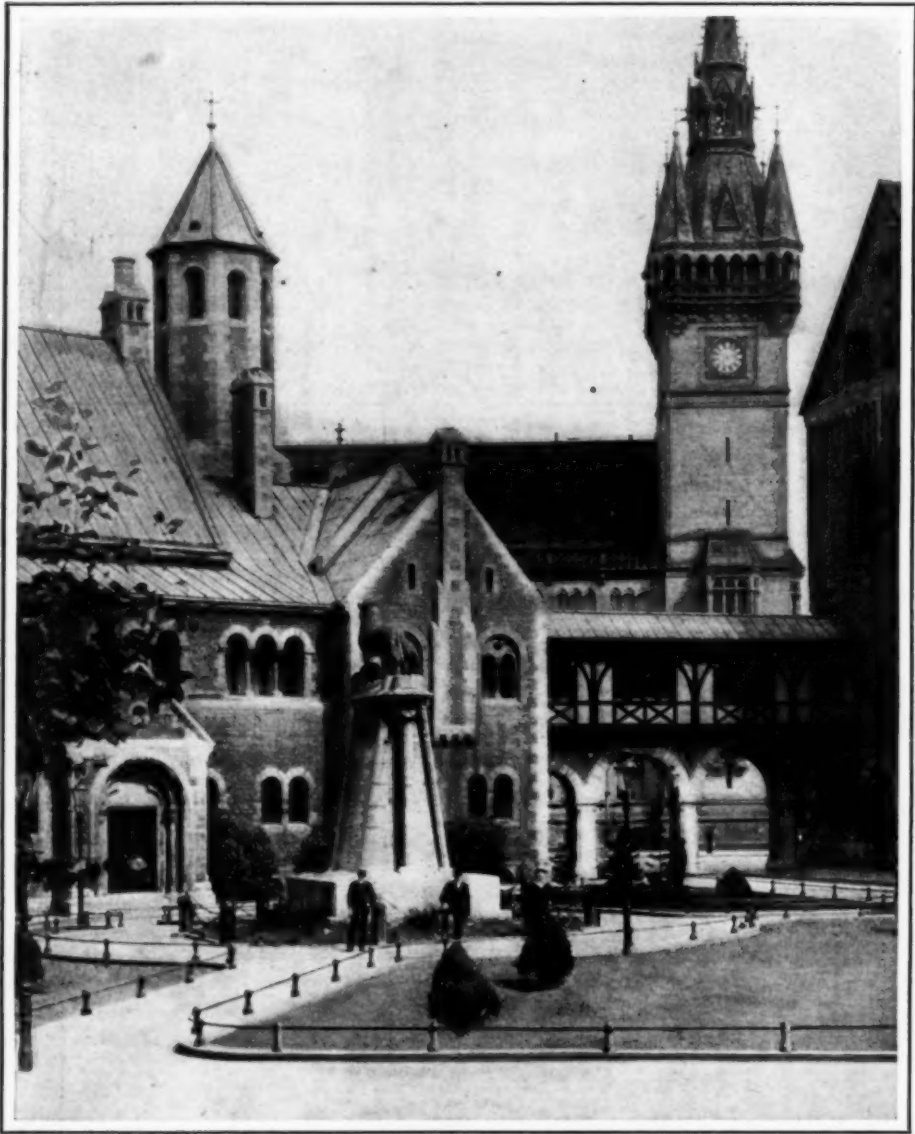
Henry, who succeeded to what was in all essentials a federal state, the contest for the possession of Alsace and Lorraine became an important issue in Franco-Ger-



THE ZWINGER, DRESDEN—THIS LARGE BUILDING, BEGUN IN 1711, IS ONE OF THE PALACES OF THE SAXON CAPITAL, BUT NOW CONTAINS A FAMOUS MUSEUM AND PICTURE-GALLERY, ONE OF THE FINEST COLLECTIONS IN EUROPE

man relations. The clash came when Otto attempted to interfere in the affairs of the West Frankish kingdom. In retaliation,

Otto also crushed the belligerent Duke of Bohemia, and brought him to submission. After administering a decisive de-



THE BURG DANKWARDERODE, OR OLD CASTLE, IN BRUNSWICK, WITH THE BRONZE LION ERECTED IN 1166 BY HENRY THE LION, DUKE OF SAXONY, AS A SYMBOL OF HIS SUPREMACY

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Louis IV, known as Louis d'Outremer, invaded Alsace and laid claim to Lorraine. Louis was overwhelmingly defeated, but the problem of Alsace-Lorraine remained.

feat to the Magyars in the battle of the Lech, near Augsburg, in 955—a battle which decided the destiny of the Magyars as an eastern and not a western nation—



THE AUGUSTUS PLATZ, THE MOST IMPORTANT SQUARE IN LEIPSIK, WITH THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS AND THE PAULINERKIRCHE, OR PAULINE CHURCH

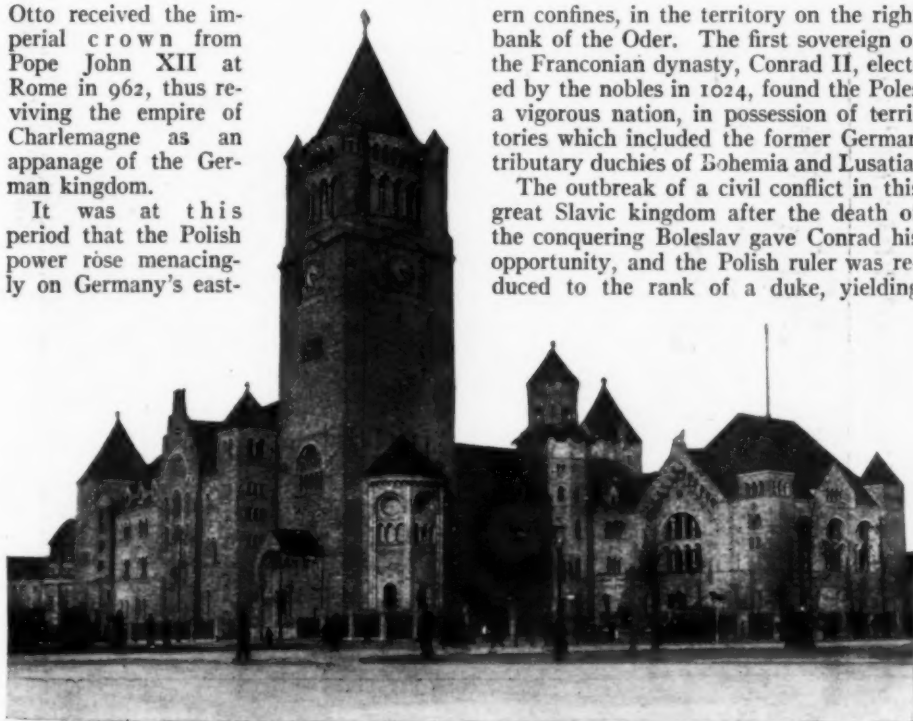
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Otto received the imperial crown from Pope John XII at Rome in 962, thus reviving the empire of Charlemagne as an appanage of the German kingdom.

It was at this period that the Polish power rose menacingly on Germany's east-

ern confines, in the territory on the right bank of the Oder. The first sovereign of the Franconian dynasty, Conrad II, elected by the nobles in 1024, found the Poles a vigorous nation, in possession of territories which included the former German tributary duchies of Bohemia and Lusatia.

The outbreak of a civil conflict in this great Slavic kingdom after the death of the conquering Boleslav gave Conrad his opportunity, and the Polish ruler was reduced to the rank of a duke, yielding



THE ROYAL SCHLOSS IN POSEN, A CASTLE-PALACE BUILT BY THE PRESENT KAISER IN THE CAPITAL OF PRUSSIAN POLAND

fealty to the emperor. With the help of the Danes, Conrad also reduced the Wends, another Slavic tribe, who inhabited what is now the kingdom of Saxony, and whose great numbers have been reduced to a remnant of a hundred thousand souls, still clinging to their Slavic tongue.

The reduction of the Slavs continued with uninterrupted energy during the reign of Henry III (1039-1056), who wore the crown of Burgundy as well as that of Germany. This emperor took an aggressive part in the affairs of the Papacy, by entering Rome with armed force in 1046, deposing three prelates who were contending for the pontifical office, and raising the Bishop of Bamberg to the throne of St. Peter as Clement II.

The controversies between the empire and the papal power reached a dramatic crisis in the succeeding reign, when Hildebrand, the vigor-

ous monk who became Pope as Gregory VII, forced Henry IV (1056-1106) to do penance before him at Canossa, barefoot and clad in a penitent's shirt.

With Henry V (1106-1125) the Franconian line ended ingloriously. Out of the confusion that followed its extinction emerged the new dynasty of Hohenstaufen, whose one great prince was the famous Frederick I, surnamed Barbarossa (1152-1190). This romantic sovereign, whose memory survives with impressive persistence in the legends of the German race, did much to restore the greatness of the Holy Roman Empire. He brought Denmark back to its old condition of vassalage, reestablished the imperial authority over Poland, reasserted the royal title to Burgundy, and acquired Upper Burgundy, or Franche Comté, by marriage. At home he curbed the rapacity of the barons and gave an impetus to the



THE FOUNTAIN IN THE AUGUSTUS PLATZ, LEIPSIK—IN THE BACKGROUND IS THE NEW THEATER, A BUILDING DESIGNED BY LANGHANS AND OPENED IN 1867

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THE MARKET-PLACE OF NUREMBERG, WITH THE SCHÖNE BRUNNEN, OR BEAUTIFUL FOUNTAIN, IN THE FOREGROUND, AND THE FRAUENKIRCHE, OR CHURCH OF OUR LADY, ON THE RIGHT—OF ALL GERMAN CITIES, NUREMBERG IS PERHAPS THE MOST INTERESTING TO THE TRAVELER

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political independence of the large cities—the last being a development which has played no inconsiderable part in the life of Germany by promoting self-government, commerce, and education.

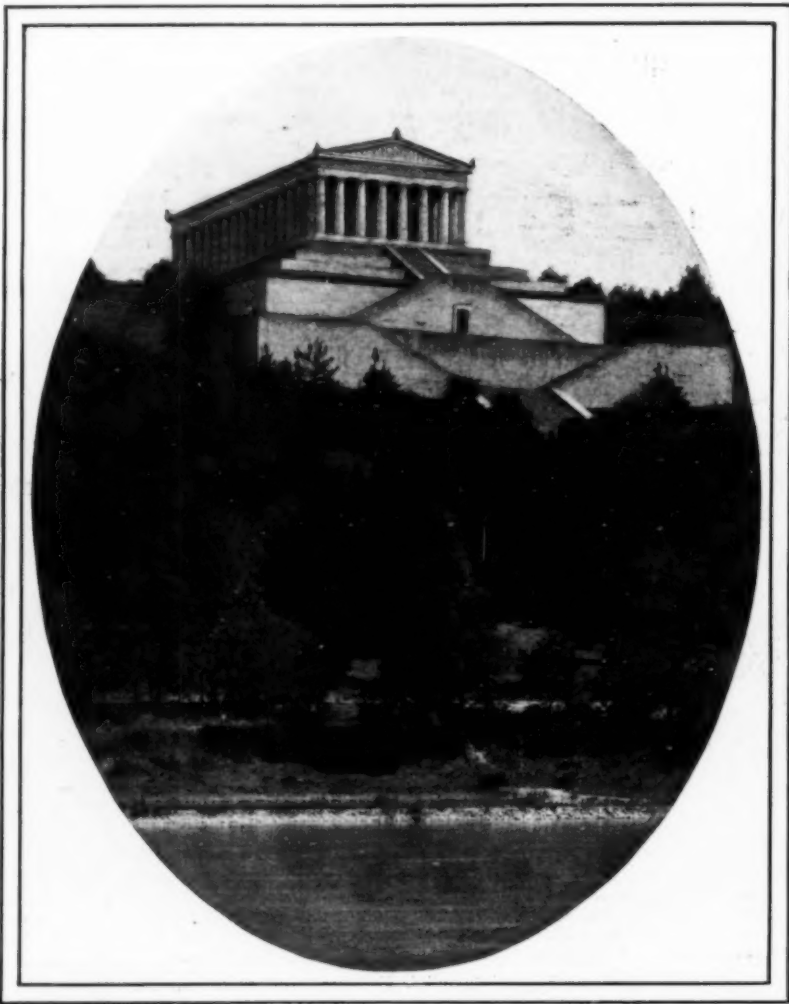
The half-century following the death of Frederick Barbarossa, who was drowned in Cilicia while leading the Third Crusade, was made notable by the exploits of the

conquering Knights of the Teutonic Order. These militant missionaries subdued the Prussians, a heathen people east of the lower Vistula, and established German colonization in what is now the north-eastern corner of its territory. This task was accomplished in conjunction with the Knights of the Sword, who had exterminated heathenism in Livonia and Courland,

now a part of the Baltic provinces of Russia.

The period of the Hohenstaufen domination and of the interregnum that followed the death of the last Hohenstaufen, Conrad IV, in 1254, is notable because of

thedrals of Germany began to lift their points heavenward under the stimulus of religion and of an awakening artistic impulse. Woman rose to a higher position; a refinement of manners followed her elevation. The national consciousness de-

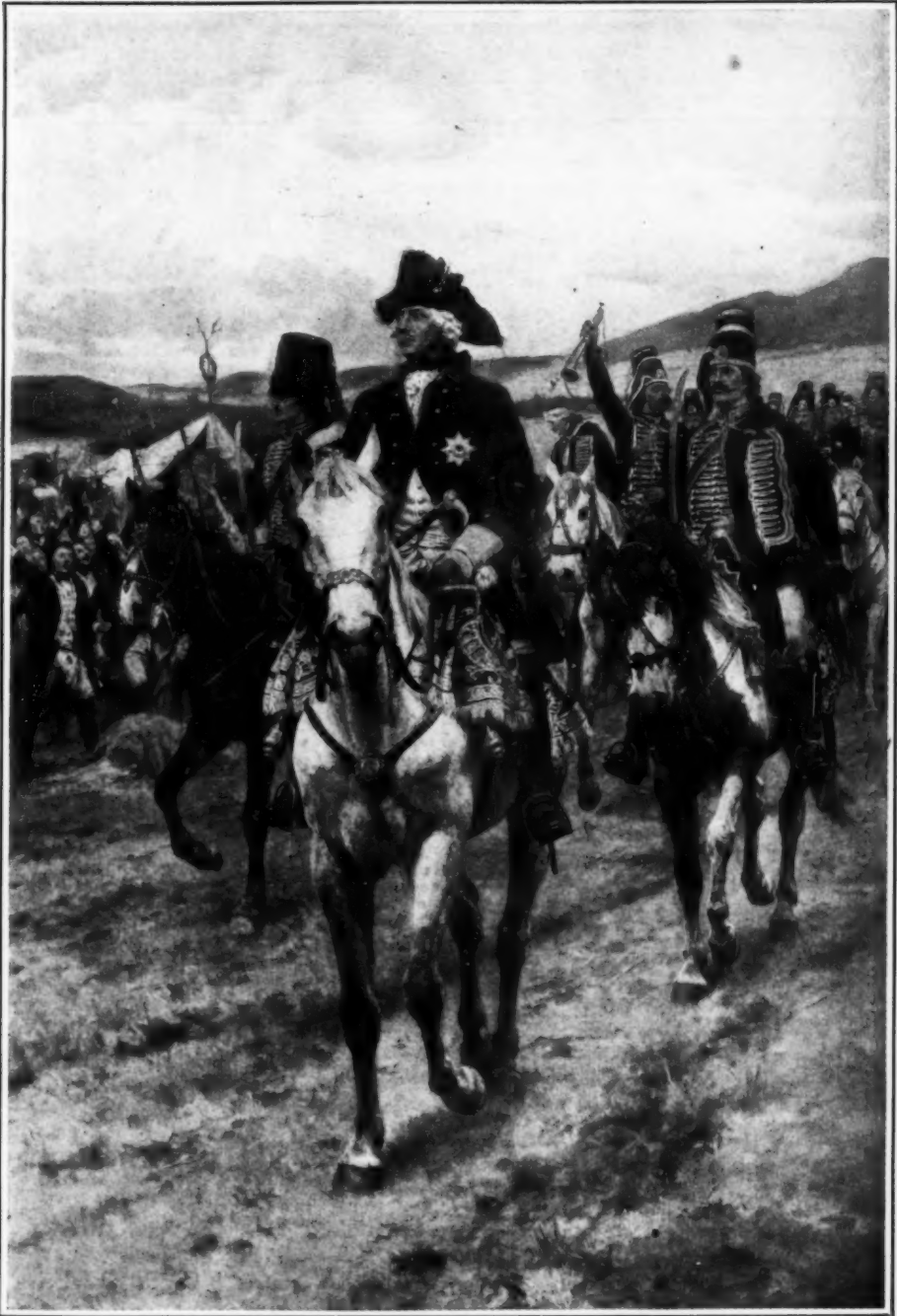


THE WALHALLA, OR TEMPLE OF FAME, BUILT BY KING LUDWIG (LOUIS) I OF BAVARIA IN 1830-1842, TO CONTAIN THE BUSTS OF ONE HUNDRED FAMOUS GERMANS—IT STANDS ON THE BANK OF THE DANUBE, NEAR REGENSBURG, IN BAVARIA

the development of German political, social, and intellectual life. The ideals of chivalry reached their highest phase in this era. The national genius found expression in the romances of the minnesingers. The Gothic spires of some of the famous ca-

veloped. The designation *Deutsch* began to be applied generally to the German race.

This social crystallization was accompanied by political disintegration, at least so far as the imperial idea was concerned. On the one hand the nobles were consoli-

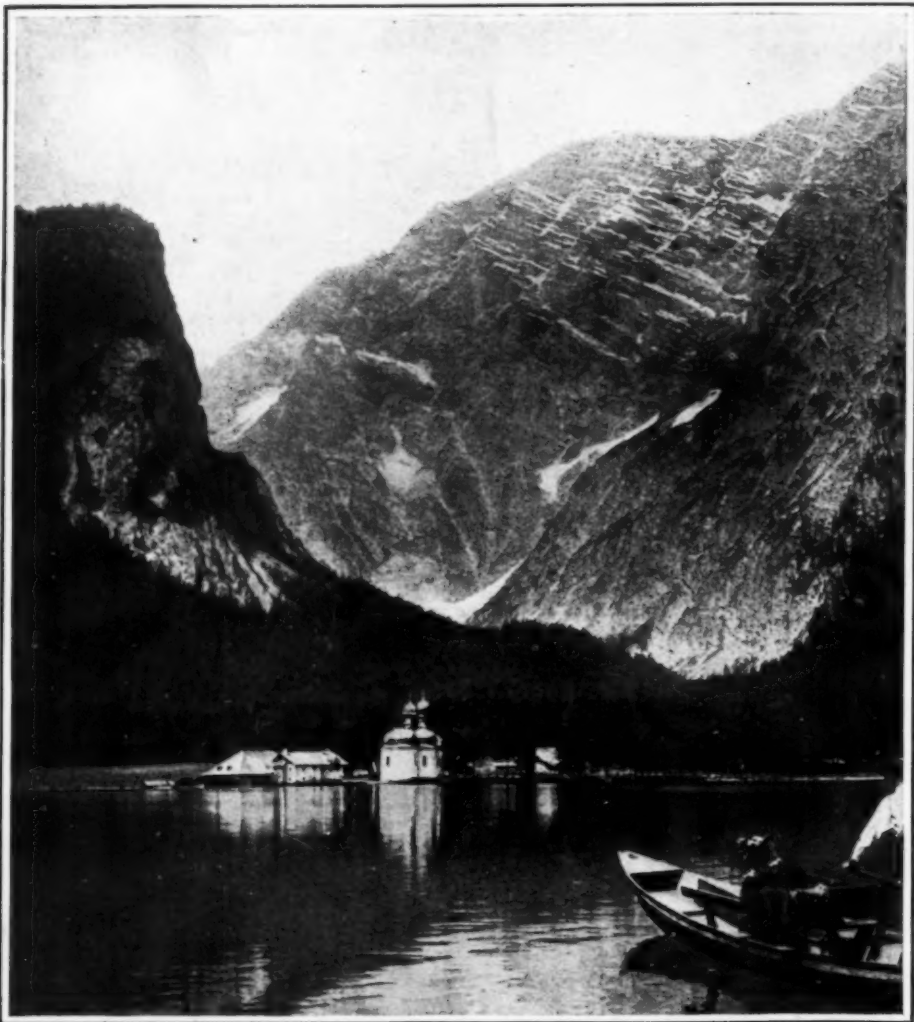


FREDERICK THE GREAT AT THE HEAD OF HIS TROOPS

From the painting by Werner Schuch—copyright, Photographische Gesellschaft—by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New York

dating their strength by a series of agreements designed to weaken the central power. The cities were demonstrating another significant tendency by their increas-

In this period of political confusion, however, a new unifying force began to make itself felt in German affairs. This force was the house of Hapsburg, destined

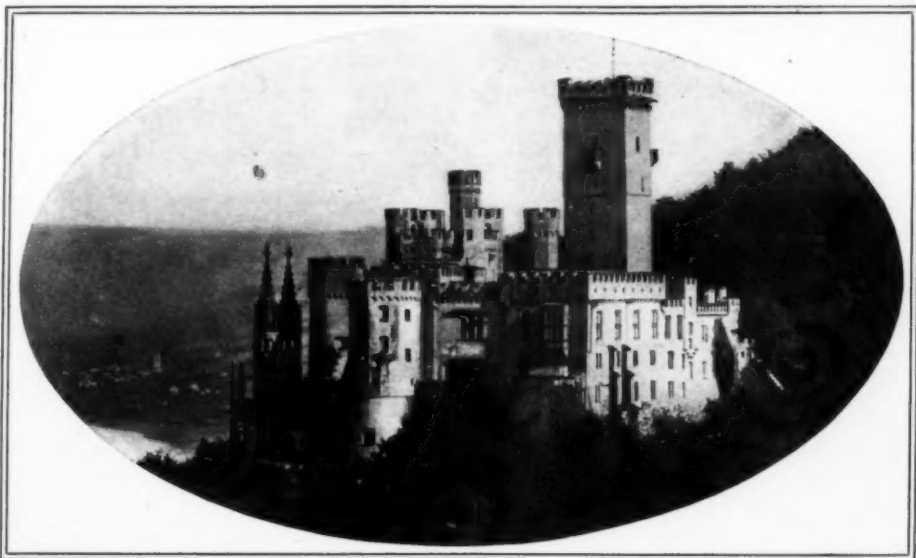


A TYPICAL VIEW IN THE BAVARIAN ALPS, THE LOFTIEST MOUNTAINS OF GERMANY—THE BEAUTIFUL LAKE OF THE KÖNIGSSEE, WITH THE SNOWY ROCKS OF THE WATZMANN, NEARLY NINE THOUSAND FEET HIGH

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

ing independence, made effective by the formation of such bodies as the Rhenish Confederation, which included no less than seventy cities, and the Hanseatic League, arising out of an alliance between Hamburg and Lübeck.

to long rivalry with the present imperial dynasty of Hohenzollern. The first Hapsburg to wear the imperial crown was Count Rudolf, a Swabian noble, upon whom in 1273 fell the choice of the seven electors—the Archbishops of Mayence, Cologne, and



STOLZENFELS, A CASTLE PICTURESQUELY SITUATED ON THE WEST BANK OF THE RHINE, AT CAPELLEN, A FEW MILES ABOVE COBLENZ—BUILT BY FREDERICK WILLIAM IV IN 1836-1842, IT NOW BELONGS TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM II



A GENERAL VIEW OF STRASSBURG, THE CAPITAL AND CHIEF CITY OF ALSACE, WHICH BELONGED TO FRANCE FROM 1681 TO 1871—ABOVE THE ROOFS OF THE TOWN RISES THE FAMOUS CATHEDRAL WITH ITS LOFTY TOWER

Trèves, the Dukes of Wittelsbach and of Saxony, the King of Bohemia, and the Margrave of Brandenburg—because of his apparent weakness. Thus it happened that a Brandenburger helped to place upon the

Sigismund (1410-1437), a Hapsburg, who pledged the province of Brandenburg, for a loan of four hundred thousand gulden, to Frederick, Count of Hohenzollern. Sigismund had squandered his resources in



THE CATHEDRAL OF MAINZ, OR MAYENCE, ONE OF THE MOST ANCIENT AND INTERESTING CHURCHES IN GERMANY, MOSTLY IN THE ROMANESQUE STYLE, AND BUILT BETWEEN 1036 AND 1243

throne a Hapsburg, with whose successors future Brandenburgers were to contest the imperial title on many a hard-fought battlefield.

The fortunes of the house of Hohenzollern were founded, strangely enough, by

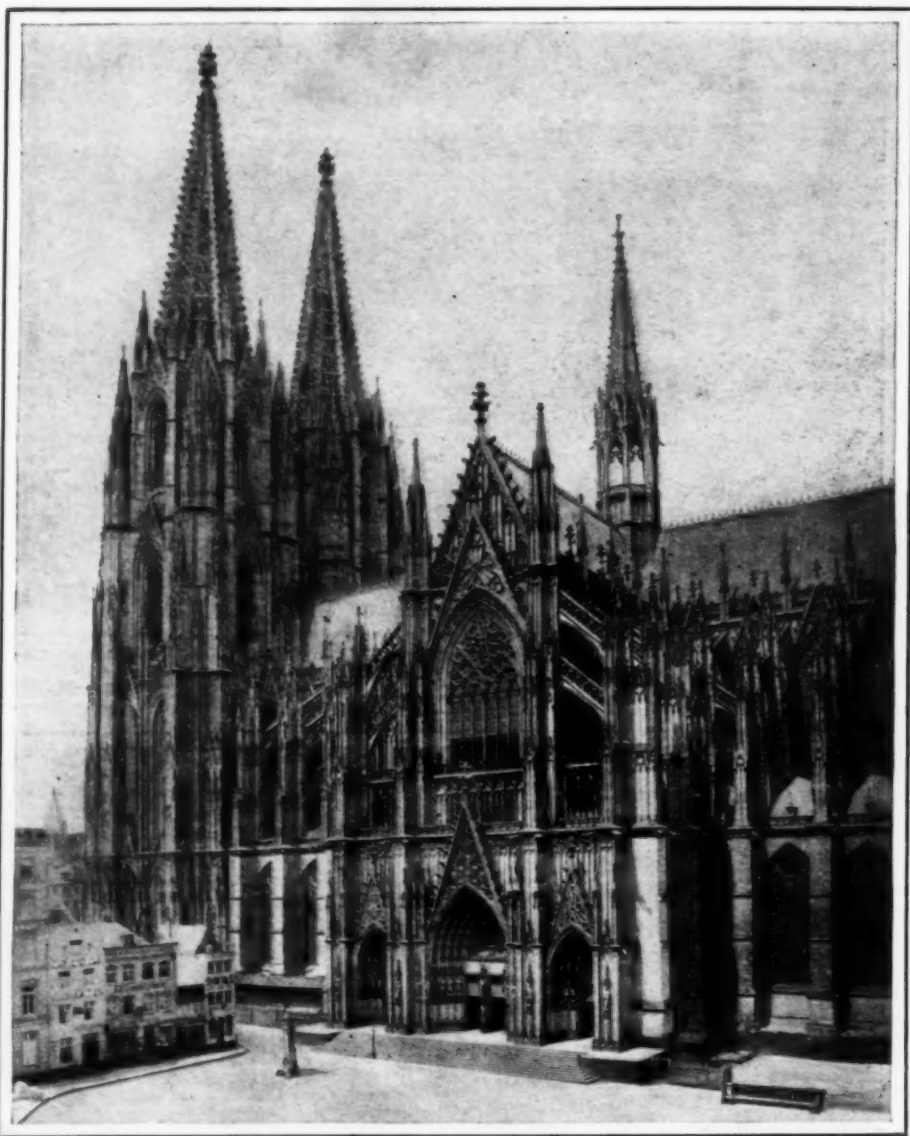
lavish living and in war upon the followers of John Huss, the Bohemian reformer, who was burned at the stake in 1415. As a Hohenzollern possession, Brandenburg was destined to play a great part in German history.



VIEW FROM THE ROSSEL, A FAMOUS VIEW-POINT ON THE NIEDERWALD HILL, LOOKING ACROSS THE RHINE TO THE OLD TOWN OF BINGEN AND THE VALLEY OF THE NAHE, A TRIBUTARY OF THE RHINE



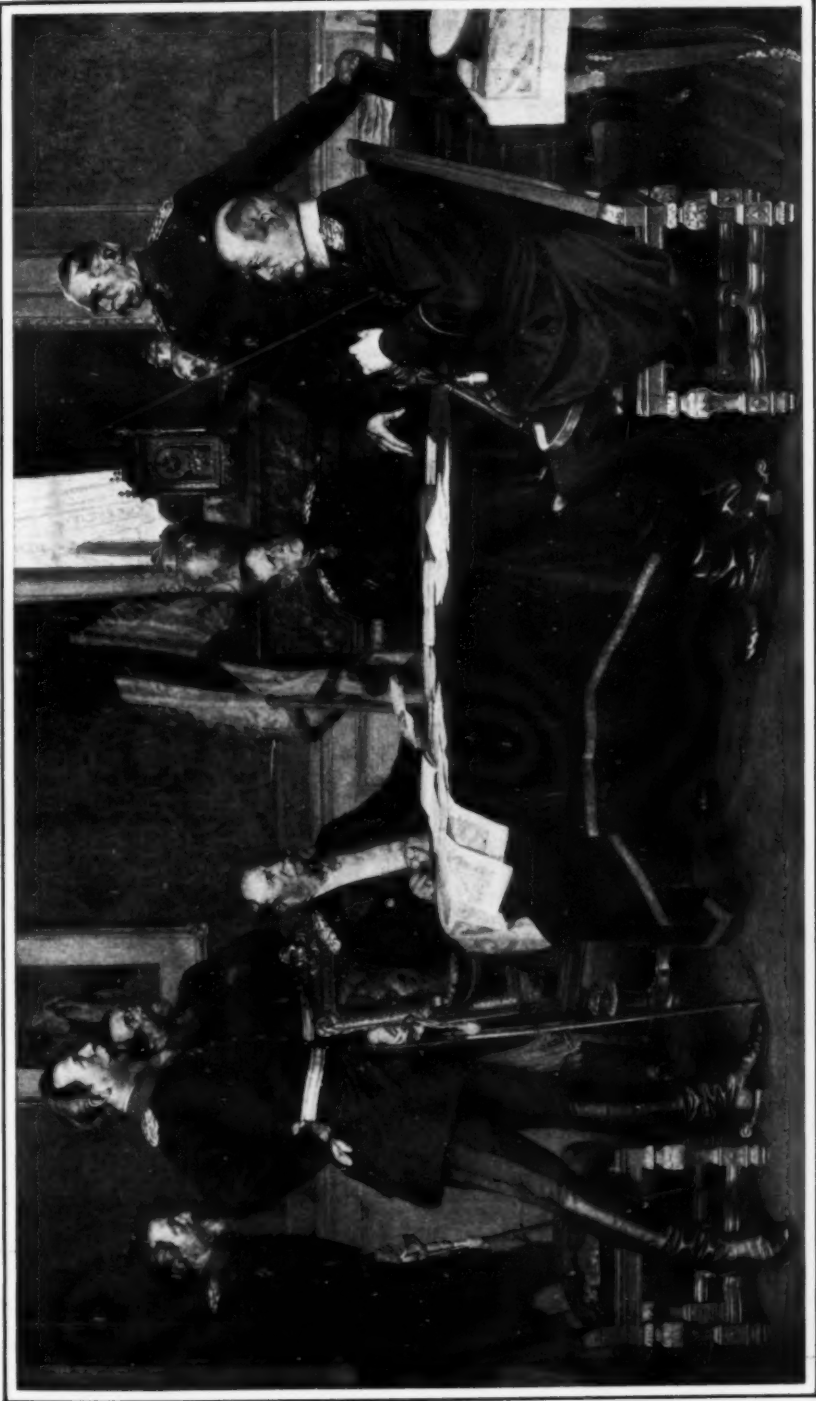
KRUPP GUNS IN THE MAKING—A SCENE IN THE GREAT STEEL-WORKS AT ESSEN, A BUSY AND RAPIDLY GROWING CITY WHICH IS THE CHIEF INDUSTRIAL CENTER OF THE COAL AND IRON DISTRICT OF WESTPHALIA



COLOGNE CATHEDRAL, THE FINEST GOTHIC CHURCH IN GERMANY, AND ONE OF THE GRANDEST IN EUROPE, BEGUN IN 1248, BUT ONLY COMPLETED IN 1880—THIS VIEW SHOWS THE SOUTH PORTAL AND THE TWO WESTERN TOWERS, FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN FEET HIGH

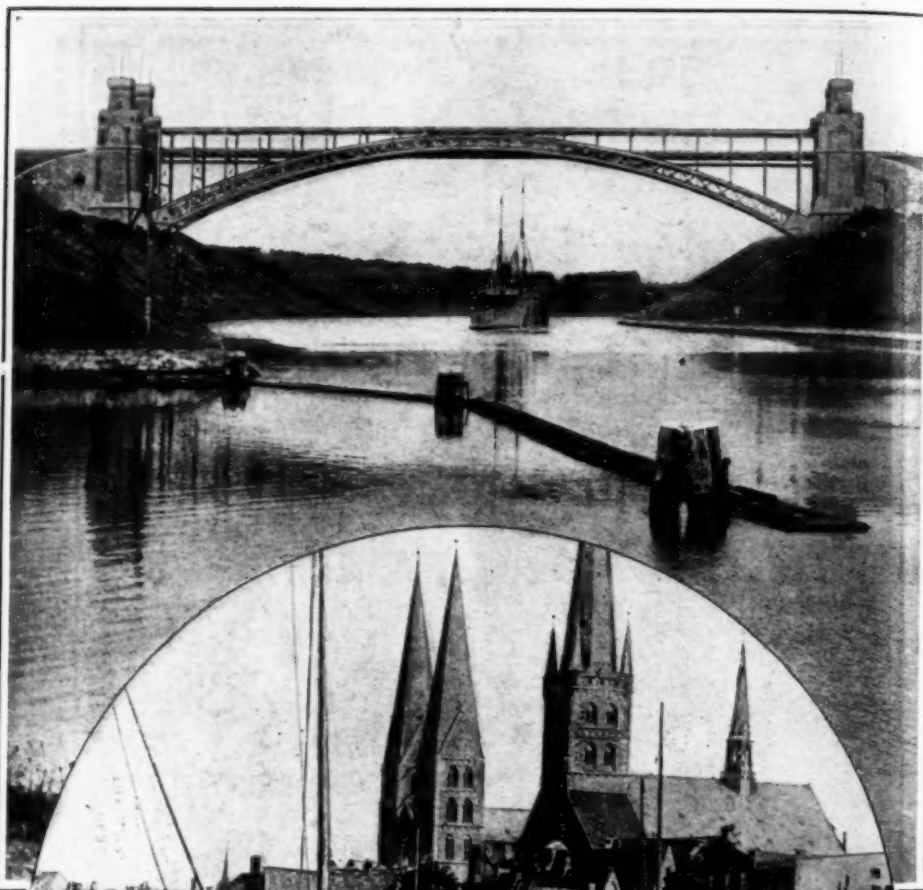
Dynastically the reign of Sigismund is significant because of the firm tenure which the house of Hapsburg was establishing upon the German crown. His son-in-law, Albert II (1438-1439), besides holding the duchy of Austria, became King of Bohemia and of Hungary. Thus the basis of the Austro-Hungarian empire was laid.

Frederick III (1440-1493), who followed Albert II upon the throne, was the last head of the Holy Roman Empire to be crowned in Rome. During his reign the French seized the duchy of Burgundy, and the Hohenzollerns began to loom large in German affairs through the leadership which Albert, Margrave of Brandenburg,



A COUNCIL OF WAR AT VERSAILLES, DURING THE SIEGE OF PARIS IN 1870-1871.—FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, THE FIGURES ARE GENERAL VON BLUMENTHAL, THE CROWN PRINCE (AFTERWARD THE EMPEROR FREDERICK III), GENERAL VERDY DU Vernois, THE EMPEROR WILLIAM I, FIELD-MARSHAL VON MOLTKE, COUNT VON ROON, AND PRINCE BISMARCK

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THE
UPPER
ENGRAVING
SHOWS THE
KAISER WIL-
HELM CANAL,
GENERALLY KNOWN
AS THE KIEL CANAL,
WHICH CUTS THROUGH
HOLSTEIN FROM THE NORTH
SEA, AT THE MOUTH OF THE
ELBE, TO THE BALTIC, AND IS AN IM-
PORTANT FACTOR IN GERMAN NAVAL STRATEGY

THE
LOWER
ENGRAVING
IS A VIEW IN
THE OLD NORTH
GERMAN TOWN
OF LÜBECK, WITH
ITS CANALS AND ITS
TALL CHURCH TOWERS—
LÜBECK WAS LONG A POWER
IN THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE, AND IS
STILL A "FREE CITY" WITHIN THE EMPIRE

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took in the war of the princes against a coalition of German cities with the Swiss League.

While these events were being shaped to the course of destiny, a new movement—one of the most significant in history—was taking form. This mighty force in the spiritual life of Germany—the Reformation—burst upon the world when Martin Luther, in 1517, nailed to the door of a church in Wittenberg his famous theses.

When Charles V, already King of Spain, donned the imperial crown in 1519, he found, on arriving in his German dominions, that they were aflame with an intense agitation. Princes and people were involved in a bitter controversy over the teachings of Luther. The emperor's treatment of the crisis marked the beginning of a political upheaval destined finally to plunge Germany into the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, the most ruinous of all the costly struggles of religious hate.

At the Diet of Worms, in 1521, the emperor issued an edict condemning Luther and proscribing his teachings as illegal. Some of the German princes, however, under the leadership of John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, took an aggressive stand in support of the Protestant cause. Charles, confronted with a threatened invasion by the Turks, temporized by such expedients as the Peace of Nuremberg, under which toleration was pledged to the Lutherans. The Protestant princes, to assure their position, formed the League of Schmalkald, to which most of the North German principalities and cities, and some in the south, gave their adherence.

With this confederation the emperor, having obtained a breathing-spell in his difficulties abroad, dealt vigorously in 1546, when at the battle of Mühlberg he captured the Saxon elector and killed the Landgrave Philip. At this juncture Henry II of France seized the opportunity to invade Germany, occupied the bishoprics of Metz, Verdun, and Toul, and held them against the shattered power of Charles V. This disaster so crushed the spirit of the emperor that he resigned his crowns, transferring the government of Germany to his brother, Ferdinand (1556-1564), and giving the Netherlands, Spain, and the Two Sicilies to his son Philip.

Through three subsequent reigns the forces that were to figure in the Thirty

Years' War were alining themselves for the struggle, with the Protestant Union and the Catholic League organized in the hostile camps. The conflict took definite form when Ferdinand, Duke of Styria, inaugurated a campaign of extermination against the adherents of the new faith in his dominions. Having succeeded to the imperial throne, he transferred his war upon Protestantism to Bohemia; and in the following year Frederick V, King of Bohemia, suffered a crushing defeat, despite the aid of the union.

Ferdinand then invaded the Palatinate with Spanish troops, and threatened the union with a war of extermination. Thereupon England, Holland, and Denmark, allied under the designation of the Protestant League, came to the aid of the menaced cause. Wallenstein, a Bohemian noble, raised an imperial army independently of the Catholic princes of Germany, attacked King Christian IV of Denmark, seized the duchy of Mecklenburg, and compelled Denmark to make peace. At the end of these operations, in 1629, Ferdinand redoubled the rigors of his measures for crushing the Protestant leaders.

Out of the pall of smoke that enveloped Europe at this juncture rose the colossal figure of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. Invading Germany in 1631 with thirty thousand picked troops, Gustavus Adolphus crushed Tilly and the combined forces of the Catholic League at the battle of Breitenfeld, marched to Munich at the back of the fleeing imperialists, and shattered their last rally, under Wallenstein, at Lützen, where the Swedish king fell in the hour of victory.

Under the peace of Westphalia, which finally put an end to the devastation of Germany in 1648, the rights of both creeds were established, and the Protestant princes were confirmed in all the territories which they had held before 1624. Germany recognized the possession of the bishoprics of Metz, Verdun, and Toul by France, to which country was also ceded the Austrian portion of Alsace. To Sweden the emperor surrendered the control of the Baltic and North seas by ceding Western Pomerania, including Stettin, with Wismar, Bremen, and other territories.

Upon the people of Germany the war had produced disastrous effects. Its devastation surpassed the ravages wrought by Attila. The empire lost half its people and

most of its wealth. Politically, too, it suffered a lamentable setback. The leagues of free cities fell to pieces. The power of the princes became autocratic. The diets, or local legislative assemblies, which had been gradually developing for centuries before the opening of the great conflict, were stamped out.

The process of recuperation was slow. Leopold I, who ascended the throne in 1658, soon found himself enmeshed in a net of complications, set for him by Louis XIV of France, who stirred up the princes against the emperor and took advantage of the ensuing confusion to seize Strassburg and other German possessions along the French frontier. In the later years of Leopold's reign Germany was involved in another great European conflict, the so-called War of the Spanish Succession, in which again, as in the Thirty Years' War, Germans fought on both sides.

At the end of the struggle, though it was made memorable by the joint victories of the English Marlborough and the German Prince Eugene, Charles VI (1711-1740) found himself so reduced in military strength that he was compelled to abandon the Hapsburg claim to the Spanish throne. During his reign, too, France established control over the province of Lorraine through the Polish prince Leszczyński, whose daughter became the queen consort of Louis XV.

With the passing of the Hapsburg succession from the male to the female line, upon the death of Charles, who had no son, begins the last phase of the story of Germany—the rivalry between Prussia and Austria for the dominant position in the German world.

While the Hapsburgs had been carrying on a chronic struggle against the foreign foes of the empire, the Hohenzollerns had been strengthening their position at home and assuming an increasingly large part in the affairs of the German states. Brandenburg, their first princely fief, had become, by opportune acquisitions, the center of a powerful state. Frederick William, surnamed the Great Elector (1640-1688), consolidated with his Brandenburg possession the Duchy of Prussia; and his son, Frederick I (1688-1713), assumed the royal title as King of Prussia. The third king, Frederick II, famous as Frederick the Great (1740-1786), took up the Hapsburg challenge by declining to recognize the

claim of Maria Theresa, despite the establishment by her father, Charles VI, of the female succession under the provision known as the Pragmatic Sanction.

Frederick marched a powerful army into Silesia, and took possession of that province. Maria Theresa, had pressed, won the support of Hungary by a dramatic appeal to the chivalry of the Magyars in behalf of her infant son Joseph, and eventually concentrated so formidable a military power against Frederick that he had to make peace—by which, however, he retained Silesia.

But Maria Theresa—whose husband, Francis of Tuscany, had been elected emperor in 1745—had no intention of abandoning her claims. Effecting an alliance with France, she rallied Russia, Saxony, and Sweden to a new war upon the Prussian king—the Seven Years' War, from which Frederick emerged with one of the greatest military reputations of history.

Frederick the Great was in other ways a potent factor in the making of Germany. His court gave an enormous impetus to the growing national sentiment of the people. The German mind, hitherto under the literary, artistic, and philosophic influences of the French, took a distinctly racial tone and direction.

This was the age of Schiller, the baker's grandson who expressed the soul of the German people in poetry and drama; of Goethe, the twin spirit who gave the higher literary form to the German language, and wrote in it a literature; of Immanuel Kant, the author of "The Critique of Pure Reason"; of Fichte and Schelling and Hegel—a company of giants who placed Germany in the front rank of the world's intellectual progress.

The foundations of the present political unity of Germany were laid by Frederick the Great. After he had participated in the first partition of Poland in 1772, and had filled up the gap between Brandenburg and Prussia by the territory thus acquired, Joseph II, the son of Maria Theresa (1765-1790), made an attempt to restore the ascendancy of the Hapsburgs. As a counter stroke, Frederick rallied most of the smaller states into a league for the defense of the imperial constitution.

The movement for the unification of Germany was affected profoundly by the mighty forces set in motion by the next great event in the history of the world—

the French Revolution. At its outbreak, through the agency of the Emperor Leopold II (1790-1792), and of Frederick William II, King of Prussia (1786-1797), Germany ranged itself on the side of the King of France. This policy involved the German race in the life-and-death struggle between France and the rest of Europe, which ended at Waterloo in 1815.

Napoleon shifted boundaries and sundered nationalities with a stroke of the sword. He humiliated and dismembered Germany, made Austria an object of ridicule, and gave the finishing blow to the Holy Roman Empire. After the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine under the protection of Napoleon, Francis II (1792-1835) laid down the imperial crown as a bauble rendered contemptible by the Corsican conqueror, taking, instead, the title of Emperor of Austria.

When the Napoleonic storm blew over, a confederation or *bund* of thirty-nine states was formed in Germany. This confederation expressed itself on all matters of common concern through a diet sitting at Frankfort and presided over by the Austrian delegate.

The period that followed the fall of Napoleon was marked in Germany by the slow growth of constitutionalism in the face of the determined opposition of the ruling princes. Conservative constitutions were promulgated in Bavaria, Baden, Nassau, and Weimar. In Austria, Metternich blocked the liberal movement with stern repression. Frederick William III of Prussia (1797-1840), realizing the force of the popular aspiration for liberty, sought to allay the fire by slight remedial measures, such as the establishment of provincial diets.

Germany came a perceptible step nearer to a federation by the completion, in 1835, of a *zollverein*, or customs union, which included all the German states except Austria.

Constitutionalism in Prussia was suddenly made a dominant issue by the revolutionists of 1848, who marched to the palace in Berlin, bearing the bodies of comrades who had been killed in street fighting with the troops, and demanded a more liberal rule. Frederick William IV (1840-1861), confronted with an outburst of popular wrath, conceded the organization of a national assembly. Throughout the German states, with the exception of

Austria, reforms were applied, including the cardinal features of freedom of the press, trial by jury, national military service, and national representation.

A dominant force in the affairs of Germany and Europe arose upon the horizon of events when Otto von Bismarck was made premier of Prussia by William I, brother of Frederick William, who had relinquished the throne because of a mental affliction. At the outset of his career as a statesman Bismarck set before him two problems—the elimination of Austria as a controlling factor in the German world, and the creation of a centralized federation under the hegemony of Prussia.

The first of these objects was accomplished by the Seven Weeks' War in 1866, when Bismarck, after having formed an alliance with Italy, offering the Austrian possession of Venetia as an inducement for Italian participation in a possible war against Austria, awaited the moment to strike. That moment arrived in the same year, when Austria undertook to establish the permanency of its occupation of Holstein, the Danish province which two years earlier had been seized, together with the sister duchy of Schleswig, by Austria and Prussia acting jointly.

Prussia now marched into Holstein, drove out the Austrians, and occupied the province. Austria, supported by Saxony, Hanover, and other minor states, declared war against Prussia, but the decisive battle of Königgrätz speedily forced her to her knees. By the Treaty of Prague, which followed the defeat of Austria and her allies, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, Frankfort, and Schleswig-Holstein were annexed to Prussia.

Austria was now excluded from German affairs, and Bismarck formed a new group of states, the North German Confederation, under the leadership of Prussia. Bavaria, Württemberg, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Baden were combined in a South German Confederation, nominally independent, but in reality under Prussian domination, as France was fated to discover in the near future.

The second of Bismarck's aims was accomplished in the conflict that followed four years later—the Franco-Prussian War. The struggle was precipitated by Napoleon III, the quarrel arising from his intervention against the election of Prince Leopold, a Hohenzollern of the Sigmaringen branch,

as King of Spain. France had hoped for the aid of the South German states, but they stood solidly with Prussia, and the combined armies of Germany won a sweeping victory. Napoleon III was captured at Sedan, Paris was besieged and taken. Under the Treaty of Frankfort, signed on May 10, 1871, Prussia exacted the cession of Alsace and the eastern part of Lorraine, and imposed upon France an indemnity of five thousand million francs. Meanwhile, on January 18 of that year, Bismarck's dream of empire had come true in the Hall of Mirrors in the palace of Versailles, where King William, amid the plaudits of the assembled princes, was proclaimed the first emperor of united Germany.

The next dramatic struggle that the Iron Chancellor directed was a trial of strength with the Papacy, which ended in the imposition of a degree of state control upon the Catholic clergy in Germany. It was another great issue—the question of the increasing power of socialism and the method of combating it—that finally brought about the fall of the chancellor who had made Germany possible. Accustomed to the employment of undisguised force in the solution of political puzzles, Bismarck favored direct and simple means of suppressing the discontent among the laboring classes. The young Emperor William II, grandson of William I, did not accept this view. The result was the enforced resignation of the chancellor on March 18, 1890—an event that caused a world-wide stir.

Since the fall of Bismarck, the development of the empire has been largely the handiwork of the present Kaiser. When

Frederick III, the son of William I, died on June 15, 1888, after a three months' reign, it soon became apparent that so far as the constitution did not actually forbid, William II was determined to rule Germany himself. Under his energetic leadership, Germany's material progress has been nothing less than marvelous.

This progress is indicated by the figures which show that German foreign commerce, starting at the bottom in the year immediately following the Franco-Prussian War, attained the enormous total of five billions of dollars in 1913; by the building up, within a quarter of a century, of the second greatest merchant marine in the world; by the acquisition, through purchase, treaty, or seizure, of a colonial empire in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Ocean aggregating more than a million square miles. These are only part of the amazing achievements of an amazing reign, of which the latest chapter is being written by the sword.

Of the offensive and defensive establishment of Germany, the naval branch is distinctly the creation of William II. The German navy, which practically began in 1898 with the passage of the first navy law by the Reichstag, has been built upon his insistent recommendations and is directly under his command, without the participation of the federated states. The construction of this vast armament, consisting, under the law of 1912, of forty-one battle-ships of the line, twelve large and thirty small armored cruisers, besides a swarm of minor craft, is one of the most conspicuous triumphs of a sovereign whose professed aim has been to win for Germany "a place in the sun."

MY ALLIES

BESIDE a noble company
Right joyously I ride;
My fighting men are little dreams,
Stanch songs are at my side.

Full gaily do I sally out,
Assured of victory,
To charge with gladly ringing shout
Whatever foe I see.

The battle may be wild and long,
And many a sword may gleam,
But what can stand against a song,
Or overcome a dream?

Mary Carolyn Davies

THE MEN OF OLD

BY WILLIAM SLAVENS McNUTT

ILLUSTRATED BY P. J. MONAHAN



HE old master of sailing ships paced the floor with the catlike step of those accustomed to heaving, wet decks, while I read triumphantly the newspaper account of the heroism of some tourists who had gone calmly to their death with the sinking of a ship in the treacherous and little-guarded inside passage to Alaska.

The survivors told of men standing on the sinking decks calmly bidding their friends good-by; of women who stood by their husbands unafraid while the water crept up to claim them, and of some of the doomed who joked within the minute previous to their embarkation into eternity.

"That doesn't sound as though bravery on the seas was a thing of the past, does it?" I inquired when I had finished. "I guess the men of to-day can die as nobly as those of any other time, even if we are supercivilized, as you claim, and steam has—"

"Die!" the old captain snapped out, stopping in front of me. "Die? O' course they can die. Anybody can die, any time, but it takes a man to live when dyin's easy. They stood on the deck and shook hands, did they? Huh! Why'n't they spend that time rippin' off a stateroom door to float somebody, huh? They stood around like a lot o' blattin' sheep an' let the ship sink from under 'em an' never turned a hand to make a fight for a livin'.

"They stood there an' shook hands while the crew worked to take off all it could, and not one o' them brave men fetched blankets to wrap round themselves so's they could last longer in the cold water if they got somethin' to float on. Not one o' them hunted for a bit o' wood

that'd float 'em. Not one of 'em made a fight to keep himself or his woman livin'. They just died. An' because they died without makin' any awful fuss about it yuh want to call 'em brave men! I'd take off my hat to the man among 'em that made a fight to keep himself or his woman alive. That's me.

"It was fifteen minutes from the time that ship struck till she went to the bottom, an' there was loose timber enough on her—stateroom doors an' tables an' the like—to have floated every man jack an' woman aboard of her; but the best these brave men o' yours do with that time is to keep out o' the crew's way till the ship goes down, an' then die!

"Gimme the men that'll fight for their lives. Gimme the men that'll fight when there's nothin' left to fight for an' they know they're bound to die in spite o' their fightin'. Gimme the men that'll fight tooth an' toe-nail in the last minute o' their lives when they know it's their last an' know their fightin' won't help 'em. Gimme the men that'll fight for the sake o' the fightin' an' live in spite o' hell, high water, an' Halifax, an' I'll show ye men that'll lick the world.

"Gimme men like that an' I'll show ye the men that made a Yankee sailorman respected in every port on the globe in the old days; I'll show ye the men that made a crew o' one o' the old American clippers the finest body o' hard-fightin', hard-livin', hard-dyin' men that was ever got together. Yes, sir!"

"Well, these men didn't know anything about the sea or what to do in case of a wreck," I submitted in defense of them.

"Wreck an old sailorman on a strange shore an' he don't know what to do, neither," the captain answered me. "But

he'll do somethin'. He'll fight to live an' keep on fightin' till he dies. That there's what makes a race great, my boy; fightin', not dyin'. An' there was men in the old days—ah, well!"

He lit his pipe and settled deep in his chair.

"Dave Manning was one o' them men I speak of," he resumed. "One o' the old-time deep-sea fightin' men. An old State o' Mainer he was, from somewheres around Bucksport, I think, an' as fine a six-foot-two o' gray-eyed, red-headed man as I ever clapped eyes on. I knew him in San Francisco first in 1872, the winter before he shipped on the whaler Nellie J., for two years in the Arctic with old man Hunt.

"Him an' Hunt both hung out together that winter at the old Clipper Hotel on Market Street, between East and Stuart, where so many o' the old-time whaler men stopped in them days. What got 'em together first was visitin' old Cap Hanley. Hanley had his little home out at Eighteenth and Mission in them days, an' owned a little ship-chandler's place down on Stuart.

"It ain't just right to say that either one of 'em was visitin' old cap. They wa'n't. They was visitin' his girl Nettie, same as every other seafarin' man in port who could get old Cap Hanley to give him an invite to his home. There wasn't a lot of 'em got that invite, either, 'cause the old cap was mighty particular who he introduced Nettie to. But he liked Dave, an' for some ungodly reason he liked Hunt; an' the two of 'em had the inside track out there. An' then, after a little while, only one of 'em had the inside track, an' that one was Dave.

"It got noised about somehow, like them things will, an' we was all glad for it, for no man of us liked Hunt. He was well set up an' a good fightin' man, but mean. He'd stick a knife in a friend as quick as an enemy if he thought good would come to him o' doin' it, an' us that knowed little Nettie we was glad that Dave was the one she took to.

"Hunt was sailin' the last o' February for a year's cruise in the Okhotsk, in the old five-boat whalin' bark Cicero, an' two weeks before he's due to clear he comes to Dave in the settin'-room o' the hotel, an' in front o' the bunch of us offers to ship him as first mate.

"I'll give ye a seventeenth lay an'

fifteen hundred dollars bonus,' he says to him. 'An' ye know as well as I do that's an easy thousan' better'n ye'll get in any vessel clearin' from here. What d'ye say?'

"The two of 'em eyed each other hard for a bit, an' it's Dave that dropped his eyes first.

"I'll have to think it over a bit,' he says.

"Think it over?' the cap comes back at him. 'For why? Ye don't have to think to know that it's better money by a thousan' dollars than ye can get from anybody else. O' course I got a hard name; I know that as well as you. If you're afraid to sail with me you're not the man I—'

"An' that was when Dave hit him. Dave was sittin' spraddled out in a chair while the cap was makin' this talk, an' I don't remember seein' him move—he left it so quick. He was onto the cap like a streak o' chain lightnin', an' I'm thinkin' Cap Hunt would as soon 'a' had a streak o' lightnin' bump him as Dave's fist. Anyhow, he don't come to for a full minute, an' when he does Dave's leanin' over him with his knife out.

"I'm not afraid o' you nor no man livin', Dave says to him when he opens his eyes. 'An' you'll take back what ye said or I'll lay ye in the hot place this minute, split wide for good roastin' with this knife!'

"I take back nothin', cap says, lookin' up at him from where he laid on the floor. 'If you're not scared, sign on with me, an' there'll be no need o' my takin' anything back. Sign an' prove me a liar, if ye dare.'

"Dave he stood crouched over him there, fingerin' his knife, an' I thought he was minded to slit him as he had promised; but he straightened up an' nodded his head.

"Get up off the floor there if you're able,' he says, 'an' come on down to Wright & Bowen's with me. I'll sign now.'

"The cap he got up off the floor an' the two of 'em went off to the shippin'-office together. It was quiet in the room after they left, for they wasn't a one of us but knowed that they'd started on the first leg of a trip that only one of 'em would come back from. It's a big world, but it wasn't big enough to hold them two men at the same time.

"It was like Cap Hunt to get Dave as

he did. They fetched St. Jonas Island in the Okhotsk Sea along the first part o' June an' went ashore there to raid the seal rookery, figurin' that no Russian cutter would be up in the ice that early.

beach he turns an' swipes him square across the face with a sealin' club. Dave dropped on the rocks like a bull hit with a butcher's ax; an' when he comes to, he's trussed up an' lyin' on a blanket in a tent full o' jabberin' Russkis.

"It was the Siberian salt-mines for a Yankee sealer caught poachin' in them days, an' they's only one sailorman ever went there an' lived to come away. But



They was whalers, an' the sealin' was only a side-line with 'em, but one good raid paid well, an' they figured themselves safe that early.

"But the Russians played foxy for once. The cutter'd been there an' left a guard. The first the crew o' the Cicero knows of it is a volley from among the rocks that stretches two of 'em dead alongside the seals they was clubbin'.

"The rest broke for the boats, Cap Hunt an' Dave with 'em. Cap was runnin' ahead o' Dave, an' half-way to the

"A VOLLEY FROM AMONG THE ROCKS STRETCHES
TWO OF 'EM DEAD ALONGSIDE THE SEALS
THEY WAS CLUBBIN'."

Dave don't worry his head about dyin'. He no more'n got his eyes open when he begun figurin' on how to get away an' live.

"The cutter took off along with the guards two days later, an' bore away

to the southeast, bound for Petropavlovsk on the east coast o' Kamchatka. Dave was the only prisoner they had, an' they put him passin' coal in the bunkers, an' chained him 'tween decks like a wild animal when he was off watch.

"Nearing the Straits of Kurile, six hundred miles southeast o' St. Jonas Island,

they ran into a nasty sou'easter that whipped around into the southwest as they neared Shumshir Island, off the south end o' the Kamchatka peninsula, and kicked up a cross sea that tossed the cutter like half a cork.

"They was half a mile off shore from Shumshir when they struck. It was a sunken rock, an' she smashed up on it like a whisky bottle smashed on the curbstone. Dave was in the bunkers when she hit, an' he laid out three Russkis with a slice-bar gettin' to the deck first. As he spilled up out o' the engine-room onto the main deck the cutter slides back off the rock like a drunken bum slumpin' out o' his chair, an' slaps to the bottom stern first. Dave jumped for the bridge as she slid out

struck a hole in the bottom o' the sea an' be shootin' straight through it for the other side o' the world; but he hung on an' in time he comes to the top with the pilot-house, still hangin'. He was that kind.

"An' 'cause he was that kind he hung for the next two hours while them cross seas slammed down over him and smashed him against the wreckage till he was nothin' but one solid, bleedin' bruise; an' the awful cold o' that water chilled his heart an' numbed his body till he couldn't feel his hurts. He hung while the wind whipped around into the northwest and drove him in toward the shore o' Shumshir, a mile off, an' he hung till that boilin' surf tore the pilot-house to kindlin' wood an' spit the kindlin' wood up on the rocks.



from underneath him, an' grabbed onto the little coamin' around the top o' the pilot-house.

"The roller that knocked him loose from his grip tore off the pilot-house as well, an' as he went down he grabbed it again. The suction took him, an' he went down till it seemed to him that he must 'a'

"HE'D BEEN TALKIN' TO HIMSELF FOR TWO DAYS BEFORE HE REALIZED IT"

It spit Dave up with it, an' smashed up as he was, he hung to his senses long enough to crawl up out o' the way o' the sea; an' then, an' then only, he lets go an' faints away.

"When he wakes up the tide's away out, the sea's gone down, an' the sun's shinin' warm on him. He was there on the rocks alone on the edge o' the world with nothin' but what was left o' the life he come into the world with; but he don't shake hands with himself an' get ready to die. Not him. He ain't that kind. He works himself onto his hands an' knees an' starts in fightin' to live.

"He didn't have as much as a wet match in what was left of his clothes; no knife, no nothin'. If ever a man was dead an' buried that man was Dave. He'd been so beat up on the rocks an' in the water that it was three days before he was even able to walk; an' durin' that time he kept himself alive on gulls' eggs that he picked up from the nests in the low cliffs. The second day the body o' one o' the officers was washed ashore. There was nothing in his clothes but a pocket-knife, but when Dave found that he cried for joy.

"A little three-inch pocket-knife with two small blades don't seem like much for a man in Dave's shape to be so thankful for, does it? But that knife meant the difference between death an' life to him, kneelin' there on the shore o' that barren island, a thousan' miles from nowhere. Before he found that knife he'd been fightin' to keep alive just because he was the fightin' kind, but with that little piece o' bone an' steel in his hand hope run hot through him like the fire from a draft o' strong drink. With the hope come hate, good old hot, blazin' hate that burned the glaze o' despair out o' his eyes, warmed his beaten, slack body into a quiverin' chunk o' fightin' flesh, an' turned his brain from a half-dead somethin' in his head that hurt him to a dynamo that generated ideas faster'n he could keep track of 'em.

"He was full o' the two greatest stimulants in the world, hope an' hate. An' with that little knife cuddled up in his palm to keep him alive on a pile o' rock in the northern sea an' get him back to civilization, he could feel the soft, warm body o' the girl he loved crushed in his arms, an' the flesh o' Cap Hunt's throat bulging between his clenched fingers.

"There was gulls on the island by the

million, an' plenty o' seals. As soon as he was able to be up and about he killed an' skinned eight seals an' built him a tent with the hides. He lived on raw seal meat till he got him a fire goin' by rubbin' sticks, an' then he cooked a hunk o' seal steak an' rested half a day to celebrate his success. He was two days gettin' that fire started, but he done it.

"Then he begun makin' himself a boat to get away in. He aimed to travel east to Attu Island, the westernmost o' the Aleutian chain, an' then follow the islands on to Unalaska. There's better'n six hundred miles o' open sea between Shumshir an' Attu, an' it's more'n seven hundred miles along the Aleutian chain from Attu to Unalaska.

"With nothin' but a little pocket-knife to work with he started in to make a boat to travel fourteen hundred miles in, six hundred of it on the open sea!

"The only timber on the island was dwarf spruce. He cut a lot o' limbs with his penknife an' hacked down one straight, slender trunk about twenty-five foot long. Then he killed some more seals an' cut the hide into thongs. He laid down the trunk o' the little spruce-tree for a keel, lashed the small limbs to it about a foot apart with the seal thong, to serve as ribs, an' then cut notches in the keel at each end and bent the ends up to serve as stem and stern. When he had finished this he lashed small limbs together, bent the line of 'em into shape to serve as a gun'le, bent an' lashed the ends of the ribs to it, an' he had the frame of a boat; a rough, crazy-lookin' frame about twenty-two feet long an' with a seven-foot beam.

"You've been in the north? Yes. Stood on a God-forsaken spit, lookin' out on a gray-green bay, all cluttered with icebergs, an' listened to about a million white gulls squawking and wrangling all around you—overhead, all over the beach an' the cliffs, fightin' an' naggin' over the dead things that'd come ashore? Uhu! Know anything lonelier than the everlasting, mournful, mean noise o' them gulls? No!

"Well, by the time Dave had got that frame put together the lonesomeness was beginnin' to get him. The yappin' o' the seals added to the maddenin' dreariness o' the whole thing, an' he begun to break under it. He'd been talkin' to himself for two days before he realized it; fightin'



"SHE TOOK THE BEATIN' AS SHE TOOK HIS CARESSES, SEEMIN' TO FEEL NEITHER"

with Cap Hunt, talkin' love to Nettie, an' the like, an' then he begun shoutin' to the gulls an' seals to shut up. He was took wild with rage when they kept on yappin' an' squawkin', an' grabbin' up his club he started down the beach after 'em, cursin' like a madman.

"As he ran the thought that he was goin' mad flashed into his brain, an' he begun fightin' that. Nobody'll ever know the terrible effort it cost him to stop himself. He'd drop his club an' start back for his boat, tryin' to calm himself down; an' all of a sudden the noise o' the seals an' gulls would tear his nerves loose from his grip on 'em, an' he'd have his club in his hand an' be chasin' 'em again, shriekin' out at the top o' his lungs.

"He wore his fit out by an' by, but from that time on he had himself to fight, as well as all the forces of nature.

"He had the framework o' his boat done, an' the next thing was the coverin'. He used sealskins for that, sewin' 'em on an'— Huh? Why he sewed 'em with narrow thong, threaded through an eye cut in one end of a sharp stick. Made little slits in the sealskin with the point o' his knife an' sewed with the sharp stick an' the thong.

"When the frame was covered he picked out a rock with a little hollow in one flat surface, mixed red clay an' seal-blubber in it, an' cooked it on his fire till he had a sticky, greasy paste that'd calk up the seams where he'd sewed the seal-

skins together. He lashed small limbs lengthwise over the ribs in the bottom o' his boat to protect the skin-coverin'; rigged a steerin' oar by lashin' three-foot saplin's on each side o' the end of a ten-foot spruce pole; lashed in an eight-foot mast an' rigged a lug sail o' sealskins, an' his boat was ready for launchin'.

"With fair winds an' the best o' luck all the way to the Aleutians, he knew that the very best time he could hope to make it in would be from fourteen to eighteen days, an' he had to carry water an' grub for that length o' time, anyhow. The grub part was easy, with plenty of gulls' eggs an' seal meat, but he had to have somethin' to hold water an' plenty of it.

"How to carry that water! The question had been knockin' at his brain from the first, but he wouldn't let it worry him until the rest of his outfit was ready. He walked the beach for the half o' one day, fightin' for an idea, an' then he went an' killed four more seals.

"He stripped the hides off whole from the neck to the tail, an' when the skin was off he had a big bag—the hair inside—open at both ends an' havin' two holes where he'd cut around the flippers. Provided with water an' grub, he put up his sail and headed for Attu, six hundred miles away. His luck was still with him, and he made it, purty well petered out by his long watches, let me tell ye.

"He rested there on Attu for two days, laid in fresh water, gulls' eggs an' seal meat, an' then started off again, bound for Unalaska, seven hundred miles to the eastward. Two days out from Attu a native schooner cruisin' for otter picked him up an' set him ashore in Unalaska, along the middle o' September.

"He laid there in Unalaska for a month, waitin' for a south-bound vessel, an' feedin' his hate o' Cap Hunt with thoughts o' the way the cap had treated him, an' o' what he'd gone through on account of it. He got the whaling schooner Baldy, bound for San Francisco, on the 15th of October. He'd be in San Francisco by the 1st of November, with any kind of sailing luck at all; about the same time Cap Hunt in the Cicero might be expected back from the Okhotsk.

"The twelfth day out, an' about abreast o' Coos Bay, the Baldy run into heavy weather an' slammed her bow down on a floatin' log.

"The crew took to the boats, an' the one Dave was in was picked up by a four-masted lumberman from the Columbia River, bound for Hong-Kong. He laid there a month before he got a steamer for San Francisco, an' it was the middle o' February before he landed there.

"When he walked into Hanley's shop, the old man put up his hands like he was guardin' himself from bein' hit, an' screamed.

"'He told us you were dead,' he says to him. 'My Heavens! He told us you were dead!'

"'It's no thanks to him I'm not,' Dave says. 'I'll 'tend to him in time. I want to see Nettie first. You'd best go up and tell her I'm alive.'

"'When he told us you were dead I saw that in my little girl's eyes I'd 'a' give my life not to,' the old cap says. 'An' now I've got to say a thing that'll put the same look in yours. Nettie married Cap Hunt three days ago, an' they cleared for Ogunie on a whalin' cruise.'

"Things like that hit different men in different ways. Dave took it quiet. He stood there lookin' at the old man an' not sayin' nothing'. He acted as though he was thinkin' over some little proposition that didn't amount to much. After a little he sat down an' took a deep breath.

"'Well, if she didn't think any more o' me than that, it don't make a lot o' difference, anyhow,' he said, in a kind of a tired voice.

"The tears were runnin' down Cap Hanley's cheeks, an' his withered old shoulders shook with his sobbin'.

"'If she only didn't!' he says. 'She was like a dead woman after Cap Hunt brought back the news that you had been killed. She had no care for what happened then. I was feared for her mind, boy, an' when Cap Hunt pressed me to help him with her, I urged her into the marryin'. I did, God help me! I thought it might help bring her out o' the death-dream she seemed in; I thought she might forget ye the quicker; but when I kissed her good-by after the weddin', I knew that I'd done wrong. She loved ye, boy, an' she always will. Why couldn't ye have got back the sooner, lad? Why couldn't ye?'

"'Set down,' Dave says to him, and he told him the story.

"'An' that's the man I've give my little

girl to,' the old cap says when he'd finished. 'May God take her quick from the evil place that lyin' dog'll turn this world into for her!'

"An evil place it'll be,' Dave says, 'an' may ye be tormented till doomsday for rushing her into it as ye did!'

"An' he got up an' walked out o' the place.

"And make this earth a bad place for her Cap Hunt certainly did. An' it's me that knows it an' knows it well—for I was mate o' the Cicero that voyage into the South Seas, an' I saw things done aboard o' her that nigh made a murderer an' a mutineer out o' me. I've stood leanin' over the rail on many a night-watch on that trip an' figured whether I'd go an' shoot the old devil or no.

"No doubtin' the skipper had a way with women, an' the thought that he couldn't force love from any one o' 'em he had his say with never entered his head till we cleared on that voyage. An' when it did, it made a ragin' devil of him.

"She was like her father told Dave—a dead woman. She went about like a woman asleep with her eyes open, an' the skipper couldn't wake her up.

"On the second day out he beat her, and she never as much as whimpered.

"She took the beatin' as she took his caresses, seemin' to feel neither. I guess she'd buried all the part of her that could feel anything when she heard Dave was dead; an' what was left of her was just a walkin' corpse.

"We sighted our first whale the beginnin' o' March, off the south point o' Hawaii, an' things mended a mite from then on, 'cause we was all busy, an' the skipper was a worker when there was work to be done. We cruised around on the offshore grounds around Magascil, Pleasant, an' Strong's Islands for six weeks, pickin' up eleven whales, an' then made for Ogunie, north o' the Society Group, to recruit ship.

"I never did find out whether one o' the crew set fire to the old Cicero or whether some one left a hold-lamp below an' the blaze started from that. I've always thought some o' the crew set it, 'cause I never saw a bunch o' sailormen hate a skipper as bad as that crew hated Hunt; an' the fire busted up out o' the hold early one morning when we were layin' becalmed within sight o' Ogunie, an'

there was no danger o' anybody not gettin' ashore.

"The Cicero'd been a whaler for years an' was soaked with oil from deck to keelson, so there was no such thing as fightin' the fire. She went like a scrap o' greasy paper, an' there was just bare time enough to clear away the boats.

"The skipper acted like an insane man, goin' ashore. His fortune was tied up in the Cicero an' the oil that was in her casks, an' he cursed the Creator that made him to be brought to a pass like that, as he watched all he had got together in twenty-five years o' toil an' deviltry at sea turn into smoke an' worthless junk in the space of a hot half-hour.

"When she dipped under he stood up in the boat with his clenched hands raised high over his head an' give one scream like a man just struck with steel in his vitals; an' then he sunk down in the stern-sheets an' was quiet, gloomin' black at the bottom o' the boat while the crew rowed for the Kanaka village of Ogunie.

"After a while the skipper started lookin' at his wife, an' I laid my hand ready on the butt o' my gun when I saw the gleam in his crazy eyes. But he made no move to touch her. He begun cursin' her after a bit, in a low voice that didn't seem to have no snap nor tone to it, but it was the deadliest bit o' talkin' I ever heard. Even the crew squirmed under the lash o' that awful tongue o' his, an' the wife showed the effect o' his persecution more'n she ever had with all his beatin' an' cruelty since we'd left San Francisco. The things he named her can't be told by man to man; an' I'd have to call ye the devil straight from the lower world to give ye any notion o' the voice of him. But he made no move to touch her; just sat quiet an' cursed; an' so we went through the surf an' between the two points o' the low reef into the quiet waters of the lagoon.

"We beached the boat on the sand below the main street o' the village, an' when we stepped ashore the skipper's black rage busted into action. He give a yell an' grabbed his wife by the hair of her head, an' I was reachin' for my gun to make an end to him when somethin' took me sudden by the back o' the neck an' I fetched up twenty foot away on my back an' wonderin' how bad the earthquake was goin' to be.

"I got to my feet, staggerin' a mite, an'



"SHE SCREAMED OUT HER THANKS TO GOD THAT THE MAN SHE LOVED WAS WINNIN'"

what I seen sent me staggerin' more. Cap Hunt was locked with a barefooted, bare-bodied man, an' the man was Dave Manning!

"That fight was one o' those sights in a lifetime that a man remembers. The niggers made a black ring around 'em on the blazin', yellow sand; an' almost under the fightin' men's feet, down on her knees, with her great mop o' glintin' yellow hair all tousled over her shoulders an' back, her hands clutchin' at her breasts as she prayed, was Nettie. She was dressed all in white; an' kneelin' there as she was, under that hot sky, there with them heathen niggers, a shipwrecked whalin'

crew, an' those two bloody men fightin' to the death, she was like to nothin' but a lily growin' fresh an' pure in the depths o' the pit.

"An' what a fight! They went to the beach together, rollin' over an' over, an' finally broke apart. When they come to their feet, facin' each other, each of 'em had his knife out; an' from then on the fight was butcher's work.

"An' they could handle knives—them two. They fought into clinch after clinch, stabbin' an' slashin' as they come together, only to break free an' circle, crouched over an' fightin' at long range.

"They was both of 'em so smeared with

blood that ye couldn't make out which had the mortal hurts on him an' which was only scratched, till they come to a clinch at last, an' Cap Hunt's bowed back slowly straightened as Dave forced him, an' his legs begun to tremble an' bend.

"He was grippin' Dave's knife-arm at the wrist, holdin' the steel out o' himself, but his grip begun to give with his back an' legs, an' we could see Dave's arm workin' free from his fingers.

"An' then that white lily of a woman kneelin' there on the yellow sand—that marble statue that hadn't whimpered under the dirty sting o' Cap Hunt's hate—screamed out her thanks to God that the man she loved was winnin'.

"Oh, thank God!" she cried out. "Thank God! Help him, God, help him! Oh, Dave, Dave, kill him! Kill him!"

"An' then Dave he laughed out loud, an' with a big surge he snapped what was left o' Cap Hunt's strength an' sent him to the ground on his back. He was on top of him as he fell, an' then one o' the dreams that had filled his brain in the mad, lonely days up there in the foggy, far-off northern sea came true.

"When it was over he stood up, his big, bare body all slashed with knife wounds an' streamin' with blood, an' the white lily of a woman came to him with a croonin' cry, like the voice o' all the love o' the world singin' through her throat. An' the other o' them two dreams that'd been with him through all that long fight in the way-off north wasn't a dream no longer. She hid her red-gold head on his slashed-up, heavin' chest, an' the blood o' the two men that'd loved her, the good an' the bad, smeared her hair an' spotted the white of

her face. An' all she knew or cared was that the man she loved was livin' an' there was welcome arms about her that wouldn't let her go.

"Dave laughed again an' lifted up her face with her chin restin' on his big palm; an' he looked square at the woman's soul that was plain in her eyes an' kissed her full on her quiverin' lips that was huntin' for his, blind an' hungry, like a young babe at its mother's breast.

"Dave looked over at me an' grinned. He was a proud sight, a hard-fightin', hard-lovin', hard-hatin' man, with the woman he loved, just won an' pantin', on his chest. They ain't many sights like it, my boy; not in this old world. A full-rigged ship under full sail, with a fair, stiff wind, an' a thoroughbred racin'-horse, steppin' high up to the barrier; those are the sights to stir the blood in your veins. But a man like Dave with his woman—"

The old captain paused, sighing heavily.

"He shipped down there aboard a copra trader," he answered my question, when he had relighted his pipe. "Sure. He knew the Cicero'd put into Ogunie to recruit, an' he shipped aboard a copra trader, deserted there, an' waited for us to come along. Poor Dave! He died only two years back, over in Oakland, where he had his home, after he left the sea. Died within a week o' the wife he'd fought for an' won."

A rising wind rattled the windows, and the captain rose and peered out at the rain-blurred lights in the bay below.

"The old days!" he muttered wistfully. "The old days an' the old, wild ways. The men o' the old days an' the ways of 'em!"

THE PATH TO HAPPINESS

Up the hill and down the hill,
Where the sweet wind has its will,
And the grasses bend and bless,
There's the path to happiness!

In the valley just a cot
Girdled by forget-me-not;
Void of moil and toil and stress—
There's the path to happiness!

And awaiting at the door
Love, with all its golden store,
Arms that open to caress—
There's the path to happiness!

Clinton Scollard

THE TRAITOR

BY SVETOZAR TONJOROFF



IN the midst of a ring of great-coated officers, muffled to the ears against the storm as they sat their steaming horses, stood a man in peasant garb, his hands bound tightly behind his back. The group could not be seen thirty feet away for the heavy smother of snow which blotted it out in a gray blur.

The flakes swirled dizzily upon the town square, where the officers had halted. Already the snowfall had covered the charred ruins about the square with a mantle of spotless white, like a veil of charity concealing the ruthlessness of warring nations. Beyond the group, in the dim background, could be heard the champing of bits, the pawing of hoofs, the subdued hum of a multitude.

The general shook the snow from the map that he held spread out before him and peered at the lines traced upon it in the light of an electric torch which feebly dispelled the thickening twilight. He shook his head; with a frown upon his furrowed face, and turned to the man in peasant garb. His speech, throaty and harsh, sounded like a bark:

"Well, will you do as I wish, or shall I stand you up against the wall?"

He nodded grimly at the looming mass in the rear.

The prisoner blinked helplessly and shrugged his shoulders. His head moved slowly, stupidly, from side to side, as if he did not understand.

"You don't understand, eh?" growled the baffled officer. "Here, captain, you're a linguist. See if you can make this—this lump of clay show some sign of comprehension!"

The captain turned to the prisoner with an odd twist in his face which might have passed for a smile. He plied him with one manner of speech after another—with

floods of gutturals and nasals and sibilants in turn. The prisoner gazed at the speaker with dull, weary eyes which seemed veiled by a gathering mist.

Once more, as a last chance, the captain spoke in a language that abounded in liquid sounds—a soft, warm language that fell stumbingly from his harsh lips. The light of understanding dawned slowly in the stolid face.

"Ah, now we have it!" grunted the general, much relieved. "Tell him that he has the choice of guiding us over the mountain road to the fort at the mouth of the pass—or being shot!"

The captain repeated the ultimatum haltingly, as one who is feeling his way. The prisoner's shoulders appeared to droop. His arms seemed to be heaving at the bonds that held them tightly to his sides. The mist over his eyes grew heavier. He moistened his lips with his tongue. He wore a furtive air of dread, like the terror of a trapped forest creature.

"What is your answer?" reiterated the interpreter.

The prisoner shivered slightly, as if the cold had struck to his marrow. He raised his head and shook it slowly.

"He won't, eh?" The general broke out in a stream of invective, flowing in resonant, barking phrases. "Look here, captain," he went on, after the flood had run dry, "we've got to bring this—this animal to terms. The map is of no more use to me than a piece of wrapping-paper. The snow has obliterated the mountain tracks completely. You can't see twenty feet from the end of your nose. And this is the most difficult territory in Europe. Bah!"

Again the captain plied the prisoner with speech. Once more the hapless fellow gazed at his inquisitor stolidly, and his head swung slowly from side to side, as if it hung upon a pivot.

"Curse the blockhead!" roared the general as he once more shook the snow from the map, folded the canvas upon its creases, and thrust it into his pocket. "Was there ever such a—"

His voice halted in the midst of a phrase; he raised his head and listened. A distant boom sounded in the thickening darkness. Then another and another reverberated solemnly, with the slow rhythm of a knell. Faster they came, until the separate detonations blended into a steady thunder, muffled by distance, like the roar of a waterfall far away.

The general bit his lip.

"They've begun the attack on the other side, by all that's holy! Unless we arrive very soon, the whole thing will be a botch. And, so help me, we're two hours late already!"

An odd expression seemed to ripple briefly over the prisoner's face—a smile, or the furtive shadow of a smile.

Once again the captain spoke in that liquid tongue. The prisoner's lips hardened; he threw his shoulders back, raised his head, and shook it with the old dull expression.

"To the wall with him, then!" shouted the general; and his passion burst from him in a new flood of vivid malediction.

The captain turned his head away and shouted an order into the gloom. Gaunt, snow-covered figures paced out. A rough hand was placed upon the prisoner's shoulder. He stumbled forward.

When he had crossed the square, other hands backed him against the wall. A sharp command rose in the murk. Other figures, long-coated and white with flakes, loomed out of the smother—fantomlike figures which moved noiselessly. Another command was barked out curtly in the silence. The men fell into line, ten yards from the wall.

The prisoner gazed at them stolidly. One would have said that he did not understand what was going on. The word of command was heard again. There was a rapid movement in the platoon, and a sharp, metallic sound was heard. The butts of a score of rifles were lifted to as many shoulders.

The general spoke once more, in an impatient voice. The captain spurred his way to the prisoner's side.

"One more chance," he said in that liquid speech. "Will you—"

The prisoner blinked into the muzzles of the rifles before him. The tip of his tongue passed over his lips, as if he were moistening them. He cleared his throat with a hoarse cough and spoke hurriedly, turning to the captain.

"Eh?" queried the captain with an incredulous expression. "He asks for a cigarette, general."

"A cigarette?" The general's face wrinkled in an acrid smile. "He shall have it, and time for three puffs—no more. Unless—"

A hand thrust a cigarette between the prisoner's lips. Another hand held the flicker of a match to the tip of the cigarette. The smoker puffed eagerly.

"Well?"

The prisoner shook his head—this time vigorously, as if the breath of the aromatic weed had given stimulus to his wavering courage.

The general spat upon the ground, shrugged his shoulders, and growled something under his breath. The muzzles of a score of rifles leaped into line for sighting. The prisoner's backbone straightened with a galvanic movement, like the blade of a jack-knife suddenly released by a spring. He glanced up at the sky, as if he vaguely sought aid from some unexpected quarter. Then he gazed into the darkly swirling snow, and listened, as if he yearned for a friendly voice.

He heard the champing of teeth upon bits in the gathering gloom; a horse whinnied, and another answered. An iron-shod hoof pawed upon the snow-carpeted pavement. From out the stillness rose the vague stir of many creatures breathing—men and horses—mixed with the straining creak of leather and the muffled stamping of feet.

Then came a high, shrill call in the distance—the howling of a wolf. The prisoner raised his head; his eyes swept the faces about him with an eager, almost defiant look, and his chin sank once more upon his breast.

The captain began to count in a businesslike tone:

"One, two—"

A groan burst from the prisoner's lips—a muffled, inarticulate cry, like the bleat of a sheep. The cigarette dropped from his mouth. A word that sounded like the name of God trembled upon his lips in a stupid, frightened mumble.

The captain stopped his counting. A quick command brought the rifles to rest. The prisoner's breath whistled in his throat like the breath of a blown horse. He spoke hoarsely.

"He's changed his mind, general," announced the captain with a smile of satisfaction.

"Good! One can always count upon the yellow streak in this accursed race. Now then—no time to lose!"

In the distance, a trumpet blared with strident violence—then another and another, in relays of calls, vanishing remotely.

"Now, my man!"

It was the general who spoke. He held the muzzle of his revolver to the prisoner's head, as earnest of the punishment that would follow swiftly upon treachery. The prisoner recoiled momentarily at the touch of cold steel, then recovered himself and stepped forward into the road at the captain's command.

"Forward—march!"

II

THUS they started into the night, their footfalls muffled by the thick carpet of snow—a long, dark line, moving steadily and rapidly, a cloud of steam hanging over them from the breathing of men and of beasts. A dull boom, far away, told of the battle which now, by all signs, was raging on the other front of the fortress in the mountains.

The general heard the tumult in the wind, and winced as he thought of the time that had been lost. His hand tightened upon the rein; he cursed the storm under his breath; cursed the prisoner; cursed the enemy. So they marched, an army with heads bent to the driving storm—pressing on silently, eagerly.

Soon the mountains began to rise about them—hoary giants frowning upon the pygmies who had invaded them. A wolf howled again in the distance, with a whining cry of desolation and of hunger. The prisoner raised his head and sniffed the air, as if he, too, smelled the carnage from afar. He craned his neck forward and gazed with furtive eagerness along the narrow road, which clung to the precipitous side of the mountain like a shelf fastened over the dark abyss below. Then he bent his head anew to the task of battling with the blizzard.

They were making progress—swifter progress than the general had hoped to make under the circumstances. The firing in the north was already nearer. Listening intently, the general could distinguish the difference between the artillery of the fortress and the heavier guns of the attacking force. It was not too late. If nothing happened now, he would soon be within striking distance.

He breathed more easily. He began to feel almost kindly toward this cowardly lump of clay who was guiding him under dire compulsion. There was a grim note of raillery in his voice when he spoke to his junior.

"After all, what is loyalty? There is no loyalty that will not succumb before the menace of death—provided the menace is sufficiently imminent!"

"Let's thank Heaven for traitors, general."

"Amen, say I. This wretched peasant might have botched our plan entirely if he had not placed a higher valuation upon his skin than upon his country. Education makes some difference, though. If this clown had been an educated man, now—who knows?"

The general, with the caution of long habit, drew rein before a bridge—a long iron bridge that spanned a yawning gash in the side of the mountain. The blast of a trumpet brought the line to an abrupt halt.

The general peered over the side of the low stone wall. He spoke to the orderly behind him, who galloped off. Soon a motor came whirring up, and the white blaze of a search-light flared along the bridge.

"Seems all right; but look at that bottomless pit!"

The general pointed to the sheer drop of the precipice, lit up by the powerful gleam of the search-light.

The prisoner turned around and gazed into the officer's face. He appeared stupidly surprised at all this pother about nothing. He shrugged his shoulders, and spoke to the captain, who relayed the conversation to his superior.

"He says this bridge was built only last spring, general. It is not likely to have been weakened."

The general urged his horse forward. The bridge felt rigid to the tread of the charger. In the distance, somewhere

in the snow-smothered void, the howl of a wolf was heard for the third time.

"Yes, yes!" the prisoner muttered in that liquid speech of his. "To-night thou shalt have thy banquet, my brother!"

"What is that you say?" inquired the captain sternly.

"I was but babbling to my brother," answered the prisoner. "It is well to speak softly to a wolf, lest he devour thee."

"No more babbling!" commanded the captain with a frown.

A barking phrase from the general was taken up by the trumpeter in the rear, and the command was flung back through successive brazen throats. The prisoner trod lightly, almost jauntily, as the head of the column passed upon the bridge.

Once again he spoke, braving the captain's ban on his garrulity, after the manner of simple folk who know no better. It was when the boom of cannon ahead rose above the muffled tread of the rear-guard upon the bridge.

"You see, high-born excellency? I spoke truly when I said the bridge was strong. They build good bridges hereabouts. And now we are near the end of our march."

He nodded in the direction of the distant roar.

"Look here, my man, I don't like your babbling, I told you."

The prisoner shrugged his shoulders.

"Pardon, high-born excellency. We are simple folk, and the end—"

Like a clap of thunder magnified, there came a nearer roar—a roar that seemed to split the mountaintops and send them tumbling into crashing ruin. For an instant a red gleam streaked the swirls of snow.

The prisoner threw up his chin and laughed uproariously. The cold steel was pressed against his ear. A sharp voice questioned him in that liquid tongue:

"What does this mean, traitor?"

And the prisoner replied, with triumphant resonance, in the throaty speech of his captors:

"It means that your rear-guard has been blown to bits with the bridge, general. It means that my soldiers have watched your march, passing on their signals by imitating the howling of wolves. It means that you are on the wrong road, and cut off from return by a chasm too wide to be bridged for many hours. It means that the fortress is saved!"

Then he raised his voice to the full capacity of his lungs and shouted into the night:

"Long live—"

The roar of an explosion close at his ear brought him reeling to the side of the shelving road. He tried again, and his lips mutely framed the full phrase as his body plunged over the edge of the abyss:

"Long live—my—country!"

"I STILL LIVE"

HE who is not forgotten is not dead,
Nor he who lies obscure. His slightest acts
Give rise to others, which in turn beget
A line beyond control; his lightest words,
Breathed thoughtlessly, spread forth before his eyes,
Gigantic, like the jinnee from the jar—
Nor all his wit can crush them back again!

Which one of us, and be he knight or knave,
Can say on dying: "I have left the world
Exactly as I found it"? None, in truth; the past
Lives still in us—has made us what we are.
We change the past, and pass the present on,
Living, when we are gone, in other lives
That knew not ours; and no man can escape
This immortality which all must share,
Though each be soon forgotten. Think on this,
And understand—once born, *thou canst not die!*

Robert Withington

THE CONFESSIONS OF A PARAGRAPHER

by
Frank M. O'Brien



FTER all, history is rather a bleak thing. The trivial, which is frequently the most important, it neglects to tell us. Therefore, in order to get a true perspective of events, we are often forced to imagine what *must* have been.

Let us take an instance from one of the earliest chapters of history.

Trekking down the road toward Zoar at a respectful distance behind the moving-vans, Lot's wife let her fair head twist toward her old home.

"Don't try that, Mary Jane!" said her husband peevishly. "Keep your eyes to the front! Don't you know what the orders are?"

"I only wanted to see," replied the lady, "what happened to the fire-proof shingles that you put on the roof of our bungalow."

Persisting in her fancy, she went to her salty doom.

"I always was opposed to athletics for women," remarked Lot to the chlorid of sodium statue that had been his bride. "That's what you get for belonging to the Turn Verein!"

So we must write Lot down as the first paragrapher. If he said it, he had the soul of a paragrapher. If he had the soul of a paragrapher, he said it. And that, as

every paragrapher will agree, proves it doubly.

There, on the sands of the Dead Sea, is the story of every paragrapher. He takes what is coming to him, as Mrs. Lot did, and does the best he can under the circumstances, as Mr. Lot did. If his audience remains as unmoved as Mary Jane Lot remained, so much the worse for the audience. To-morrow will be another day, with dried beef on the menu instead of hash.

Raising the cup of bromid to the reader's lips, let it be remarked that no two paragraphers are quite alike. Some wear derby hats and carry umbrellas, while others believe in fairies and the referendum. In other respects, however, they are much the same.

Some humans rise cheerfully, but go to bed with the purple doldrums swishing about their ears. Others get up with their grouch in high speed, but retire chortling like sandboys and giggling like grigs. Not so the paragrapher of the daily newspaper. He does not smile in the morning, because he has a day's grim work ahead of him. At night he cannot smile, for the atrocities he has committed during the day are heavy upon his conscience.

Paragraphers are more or less like crabs. They spend their lives developing a hard shell and progressing backward. It is their

habit to capture facts, drag them to their lairs, and distort them at their leisure. The fact is captured by letting it catch up to the paragrapher, who thereupon takes it in his claws and retrogresses.

Be specific? Certainly! Here is a fact, culled from the report of a world's series baseball game:

Plank, the pitcher of the Athletics, gave two Boston batsmen a base on balls.

Nothing could be colder or more concrete. Now for the dissection, in the dim mortuary inhabited by the paragrapher. To dignify it with the stately terminology of science, it may be called a process of chemical analysis followed by a recreative synthesis.

Plank—wood—board—timber—hammer—nails.

The mind, you see, works as if it were operating for the benefit of one of those thinkographs in the detective stories. The association of words, which is used by *Dennis Deduction* to betray the criminal, is used by the paragrapher to betray the fact and the reader.

Of course, as you say, no quip has come direct from the word Plank. Its associations are barren of a jest, the baseball reporters having already stated that Plank permitted the batters to lumber to the initial sack. We must go further into the sentence, exploring every nook and cranny with the torch of the craft.

"Two Boston batsmen." No, there's nothing there. Ah, if he had only hit one on the head—"beaned" him, as the baseball writers say! But perverse fate would not have it so.

"A base on balls." It suggests nothing in itself, but can it not be twisted? Quick, man, a synonym! To be sure! He "walked" them. Triumph! The paragraph lies fawning at the paragrapher's feet:

Plank walked the Bostons, but the Bostons refused to walk the plank.

So there you are. It would have been better if it could have been the Pittsburgh team instead of the Bostons, because the Pittsburgh players are known as the Pirates, as it may be necessary to explain for readers in the South Sea Islands. How fine it would have been to remark, in that offhand way, that the Pirates refused to walk the plank! Still, things cannot always be ideal.

The next is simple. A head-line of the same paper strikes the eye:

ALLIES CHECK VON KLUCK

As the Allies have been doing that on the front page of almost every newspaper in America for three weeks, it is time that the paragraphers intervened. It fairly rolls off the pen:

If the Allies continue their daily practise of checking General von Kluck, he will begin to look like an actor's trunk.

Could anything be simpler, yet better calculated to start off the reader's day with cheer and jollity? But it is nearing three o'clock in the afternoon, and the "Crisp Breakfast Quips for the Average Citizen" are far from done. It might even be said, by the candid critic, that they are only half-baked.

Once more to the serried columns of war news. What's this?

Music boxes play in the German trenches as the fight goes on.

It is mere wrist exercise to dispose of this. Print it as it appears, and add:

Another mockery of the humane purposes of the Hague Conference.

Nobody can be offended, because the brutality inferred is not inflicted on non-combatants, unless the readers of the paragraph come under that head. Ah, if the Allies could only put a few paragraphers in the German trenches! Turpinite would be a stimulant by comparison, but the agonized faces of the doomed would haunt humanity forever.

From the battle-fields of Belgium to the talk-swept hills of Mexico is only a moment's flight for a paragrapher. Mexico is never to be neglected. Even if it be only for the sake of practise, one must take the name of the newest candidate for president and wind about it a bit of drollery regarding its resemblance to the title of a box of cigars. This may not be pleasure, but it is duty.

About four o'clock the paragrapher may be forced to scan the list of Hardy Dependables. This includes:

The High Cost of Living
William Jennings Bryan
Women's Garments
The war tax
New Jersey or Arkansas

Hats—derby, straw, or velvet
 Commuting
 Congress
 Tripe
 Any State Legislature
 Any Board of Aldermen
 Turkey-trotting
 The Weather
 Crop failures

You may note the absence of some old-time topics, as follows—and, as it were not, to wit:

Intoxication
 Mothers-in-law
 Boarding-houses
 Tramps
 Jersey mosquitoes
 Chicago culture

These inspirations were popular, not so much with the people as with the paragraphers, in that ancient time when a paragrapher was so low in the social scale that nobody would marry him. Now that all paragraphers are married—a necessary precaution against galloping melancholia—it is plain why all six topics were abandoned.

Years ago it would be pointed out to a paragrapher that a man in Waco, Texas, had brained his mother-in-law with a beer-bottle. This item would be sufficient for a paragrapher's day. Give him a mother-in-law—that is, a news item about one—and have her in any sort of serious trouble, and he spent many happy hours.

Nowadays, if you brought such an item to one of the craft, he would cry:

"How singularly cruel and brutal! But why grieve and disconcert me with such barbarous tidings?"

As for the jest about the man creeping up the stairs at three o'clock in the morning with his shoes in his hand, it still goes, but only in certain forms. Once per decade it is put over successfully, as in the case of the yarn about the man who got away with his late and noisy arrival home by crying, immediately after the crash in the lower hall:

"I'll teach those confounded goldfish to bite me!"

But that was a joke, not a paragraph. So far as straight paragraphing is concerned, the humor of the cold, gray dawn is dead and buried.

Nothing in all paragraphing is more joyous to the makers of alleged merriment than the dainty distortion of a classic stock phrase, whether it comes from the

dry library or the juicy melodrama. As an example of this art in the perfection of its simplicity nothing can be quoted better than what Mr. Adams wrote in the *New York Mail* on a day when the much-touted football-player, Lefty Flynn, had failed to live up to his reputation:

He was more Flynned against than Flynnning.

For a staple prescription to use in the compounding of a paragraph it may be written that ridiculous comparison brings the quickest result with the least effort. At one end of the world there is always something happening which is being duplicated at the other end of the world. When a Bulgarian king is defying the powers, some American baseball-player is defying the magnates. When an army is in full flight across Europe it happens to be moving-day in New York. On the same day—November 14, 1913, to be exact—the turkey-trot was denounced by both the German Kaiser and Hose Company No. 1 of Nyack, New York.

Owing to this remarkable tendency of worldly things, big and little, to bark at one another in constant rhythm, the reader finds that most paragraphs twang on the news of the day. Whatever occurrence goes farthest to extremes has to bear the brunt of the chaffing. If a statesman, as in the case of an ambassador to the court of St. James, says something he might have left unsaid, thirty thousand paragraphs are fired in his honor. On the other hand, twice as many were fired—in all kindness, be it said—at John Lind, who never said a word at all!

Farmer Swish, of Gooben County, comes to the age of ninety without ever having left the boundaries of his farm. He gets a paragraph or two. Harry K. Thaw declines to stay in one place any longer than his money can help, and he has half a million paragraphs written about him. It is only the Average Man who escapes being paragraphed, and there is no such person.

Peculiar names are the pemmican upon which a paragrapher subsists when other foraging fails. From the Ahkoond of Swat to the Island of Yap, from the newest candidate for United States marshal in Georgia to the latest Polish town invested, all are good fillers. If John Gimlet, of Farmington, is injured by a wild boar, the paragraphers augur his recovery. When there is no "Mona Lisa" theft, no income-

tax puzzle, no Dr. Cook controversy, no new dance, persons and things with strange names are butchered to make three lines of type.

Last of all, and perhaps worst, there is verse. Limerick, triolet, quatrain, or plain jingle, all poetic forms are drafted when the regular army is exhausted and volunteers are scarce. Your paragrapher is able to use any kind, any style. If he turns out what he considers a clever one, it goes at the top of the column. If, after it is planed and polished, he considers it mediocre, it becomes somebody else's verse and he prints it with a head-line indicating that he, the paragrapher, thinks poorly of it, but prints it to encourage the contributor. Serious verse which lacks the divine spark is twisted, with a dexterous touch of the last line, into burlesque.

But, day after day, the play upon a word or a phrase is the faithful standby. Converting "reversion to type" into "aversion to tripe," applying "interlocking directorate" to the wild postures of the bunny hug, mating "psychological," when that word is in fashion, with a hundred things it might relate to—these are all in the day's deadly work.

It is all so simple, and the demonstra-

tions have been repeated so frequently within full sight of the audience, that the paragrapher has little left to deceive with. His readers have come to be familiar with the tools of the trade. The component parts of a paragraph are made so simply that, as the advertisements of portable chicken-coops say, "any one with a hammer and screw-driver can put them together." Paragraphers of the better sort just lay the raw material before the reader and let him join it with his mental carpentry.

Perhaps it is because paragraphery has become so simple that nobody offers to teach it by mail. The appeal "Are you"—picture of a man pointing his finger at the reader—"going to be a hod-carrier all your life, when paragraphing is easier than putting bricks and mortar together?" might look well in type, but the hod-carrier may value his night's sleep and the esteem of his family.

Perhaps you have come to think, after reading thus far, that paragraphing consists largely of the paragrapher and the reader meeting together and raising a pun to the *n*th power? Well, if you have conceived any such notion as that, you are perfectly right!

THE FLIGHT OF TIME

It was midnight and moonlight, the bells were all ringing,
When I heard a commotion outside of my door;
And lo, in the snow was a gasoline buggy
That had made up its mind not to go any more.

One thousand nine hundred fourteen was its license,
And, bundled in furs from his head to his heels,
Old Time stood beside it and wept in his whiskers;
For how could he travel without any wheels?

Just then, with a whirl, on a snow-bank alighted
A beautiful aeroplane shaped like a bird;
The New Year sat in it, his hand on the lever;
He was hooded in leather and goggled and furred.

"Jump in," he exclaimed, "and continue your journey."
So old Father Time climbed aboard with delight,
And, soaring aloft with the speed of an arrow,
They darted away through the star-spangled night.

Minna Irving

THE THREE PHASES OF TIMOTHY MARSHALL

A STORY OF LIFE IN AND OUT OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

BY WILL ADAMS

AUTHOR OF "BARBS AND BULLETS," "THE PUP AND HICKEY," ETC.



TIMMY MARSHALL was a little clerk in the New York office of our contracting firm. He was a regular Sunday-school kid—wouldn't say a swear word for a dollar. Used to spend his spare time in the office—when he had any—reading the *Parish News* or some such dope. There wasn't any "Daredevil Dick" or "Young Buffalo Hunters" stuff stuck inside the pages, either. I shook 'em out often to make sure.

All the same, it was that little teacher's pet, that little meek-as-Moses kid, who in three short years went through more than I have in my whole lifetime. It comes that way to some people. I'm glad I'm not one of them. But as I was in both at the start and at the finish of Timmy's adventures, the whole thing has got me sort of interested.

I was the one who really started him off. We were doing some work at an army post in New Hampshire, and I sent him up to see about something or other that had gone wrong. I wouldn't have sent him if I could have helped it, for he didn't know much, but there was no one else available just then and the work had to have a look over. So Timmy went; and right there he met his fate.

The colonel's daughter was home on a vacation from Vassar, and the minute the kid saw her it was all over but the shouting. It was a "case" from the word go, with both of them. Eye-witnesses say it was a most rabid instance of love at first sight, and the worst crush on record at

White Valley—and the post has seen some fairly hot ones, so I hear.

This lasted four hectic days, and then Marshall had to tear himself away and come back to the office. In another day or two Milly—that was her name—went back to college.

I couldn't imagine what was the matter with the boy when he came back, he was so erratic. Couldn't make any coherent report of what he'd been sent up to find out, couldn't keep a fact in his head or add up a simple column of figures. He seemed to be worse on Saturday mornings than any other time, which puzzled me till I found out that on Saturday afternoon he made a break for Poughkeepsie and stayed over Sunday.

That stage didn't last long, for soon there came a thunderbolt. Those two crazy children eloped and were married! Timmy was making just seventy-five dollars a month. Her old man had been straining himself to keep her in college; his salary and "perks" were all he had. He was a colonel, all right, but had nothing outside.

Those children had good nerve, though. As soon as the honeymoon was over they went right up to White Valley to face the music and beard the lion in his den. He roared a lot, you may gamble, and showed his teeth, but he didn't bite. He cared too much for Milly to do that.

At last, after heap much powwow, the big chief decided that the new buck had better be made a member of the tribe. Which is to say that after having found

out Timmy's salary and status with the John B. Armor Company, the colonel thought that the best thing for the future of all concerned would be for Marshall to enlist and work up for his commission. The old man didn't have money, but he had pull, and could get that commission in the shortest possible time, besides making life in the ranks easy for Timmy in lots of ways.

Pull did another thing, too. The regulations distinctly say—or so I'm told—that candidates for commissions shall be unmarried; but it's easy to side-step some rules if you know how. I've heard since of several mighty worthy sergeants who would make splendid officers, only they happen to be married, and that regulation bars them out.

So Marshall enlisted, and was started on the double on the road to a commission. Everything that pull could do for him it did. He was made a corporal, and then got his sergeantcy in record time—not from merit, either.

Some of the enlisted men were wild about it—fellows who were really out for the service as a profession, and were working their hardest for promotion. It just made them sick to have a little whipper-snapper like that jumped over them. No one cared to beat up the K. O.'s son-in-law, or he would surely have got his; it was coming to him all along the line.

However, I guess every one pays a price for being the darling of the gods, and so did Timmy—after a time. While they were at White Valley everything was perfectly lovely; then came the order for border duty, and the whole regiment was shipped down to western Texas, on the bank of the Rio Grande.

It was a hard position for poor little Milly, for it wasn't camp but a border post they went to. As her father's daughter she had been the belle of White Valley, but as a sergeant's wife she couldn't be noticed or asked anywhere—hardly spoken to, at least in public. So as soon as they were settled at the border post, her father got her a little apartment in town and arranged—pull again!—to let Timmy stay nights there. It was terribly lonely for her after being used to so much company and going about, but she was game.

"It's only a little more than a year to face out," said she, "and then Tim will be up with the best of them!"

So he might have been, had not things broken the way they did.

When the time came, he passed his preliminary all right; and the next year he went up to Leavenworth for the finals. He passed these, too. A *dunce* would have done it, with the expert coaching and advance signals he got; and Timmy was no fool, I'll say that for him. So back he came to Texas and the little wife, who had been having things so awfully hard and looking forward so eagerly to the life they would lead in a month or two.

Now butting up against all sorts of rough-necks of enlisted men from all walks of life had rubbed about three-quarters of the Sunday-school shine off Timmy. Of course, if you hang around contractors' shacks enough, you'll come up against all kinds, and will hear enough rough dope to queer you for life if you happen to be built so as to take notice of it; but Timmy hadn't had that end of the work.

He had always done the kid-glove act in the main office, where there were rugs on the floor and girls in front of the typewriters, and everything was run politely; so when he enlisted, he was just a babe thrown to the lions, with ears fresh-tuned to all the new line of talk that was going. Pull couldn't save him from that. It was going, and he had to take it; and in my opinion it was good for him, for there were many fine things mixed in with it, and it gave him a man's view-point, anyhow.

So, as I said, three-quarters of the Sunday-school polish was rubbed off by the men, and the remaining quarter that little wife of his attended to personally. She came of a riding, dancing world, where people were not irreligious, but certainly unreligious, though square, clean, and good sports to the backbone. Unconsciously her ideas of life had a strong influence on Timmy. He loved her very much, so it was only natural.

If his Sunday-school goody-goodness had really been a deep-rooted conviction, and not just an epidermis, he wouldn't have lost it in the shuffle; but by the time he was back in Texas from Leavenworth, and his commission was on the way to him, he was a totally different person from the smug little kid who used to come down to work in the office with a bundle of church papers and an umbrella under his arm, and rubbers on his feet, if there was

the least suspicion of dampness. He was twice the man he had been—only not all man yet, or he wouldn't have done what he did do.

I can't excuse him, or even give a real explanation. All I can think of is that perhaps he was a bit above himself, what with things coming his way at last, and the thought of the good time coming for Milly after all she had been through. They were both like a couple of kids just then—kids who had just heard the school door bang behind them, and saw the whole long summer vacation stretching out in front of them.

II

PULL hurried up Timmy's commission, and it was actually on its way when the first part of the catastrophe happened. He hadn't gone to town to the apartment that night, as he always did except when it was his turn to be on the guard detail. He had stayed in barracks to hobnob a bit with some of the men, who had really come to be good friends of his, and whom he was so soon to leave.

No human can live in a troop and work with the gang for two solid years and not make some good friends. And Timmy was very human, even if the men had been leery of him, at first, on account of his being the colonel's son-in-law, and were still a bit sore because of his continual pull.

They were having a quiet little celebration in Sergeant Grant's room—out of private stock, of course; nothing doing in the canteen. I'm sorry to say that Timmy had learned how to drink, but not how to hold it. He didn't get sick; he just got gay and wavy in his legs.

I don't know just how it happened, but they were all slightly canned, and the supply of wet goods had run out; so somebody dared Timmy to go and steal a keg of beer that one of the artillery captains had brought in to stimulate his men to cleanliness, intending to give it as a prize for the cleanest squad-room. Timmy being just in the wrong state—his drunk certainly wasn't a safe and sane one—took up the dare.

It was a wonder he didn't love his wife a little bit more, wasn't it? I don't call that real loving—letting himself get drunk and be persuaded to do a fool thing that might put him on the blink for life.

He stole the beer all right, but fate was against him, for just as he was sneaking back to barracks with the keg on his shoulder—his legs were wobbly, and the extra weight made him very unsteady—bing! down crashed the keg, broke, and spilled all the beer. It happened at just about the worst place in the world for Timmy—at the back door of the major of the artillery battalion.

It was late, and the major just happened to be in the kitchen, rustling a snack for himself before he went to bed. Of course, when he heard the crash, out he popped.

He was the worst person in the world to come out just then—for Timmy. First, because he wasn't knuckling down any to a cavalry colonel, even though he ranked him; second, because he knew at a glance that it was artillery beer that cavalry had stolen; third, because he recognized Timmy. He knew the colonel's son-in-law, and was utterly disgusted with the pull he had had. The major thought, in the back of his mind, of some splendid lads in his two batteries, who were long senior to Timmy, who had passed when he did, and whose commissions wouldn't come along for quite a time yet. It made him hot in the collar.

"If this fellow were any one else, he'd be up before the general court for this thing. Well, thank goodness, I have no ax to grind," he thought. "Up he goes, just like any one!"

Sure enough, he had Timmy put under arrest and confined to quarters to await trial. The major probably never thought of Timmy's wife, and all that it would mean to her. If he gave any thought at all to her, it was as the colonel's daughter and belonging to the family pull that had so disgusted him.

There was consternation in the colonel's camp, I can assure you. If Timmy should come up before the court it was good-by to a commission, for one of the rules that no one can side-step is the one that forbids any man who has been court-martialed to receive his commission. Pull couldn't get around that.

It was decided that the best thing for Timmy to do was to break arrest and slope till the thing blew over. The colonel evidently thought that after a while, when the major had got over his first heat, he could make him withdraw the charge. He

didn't know that major! So the word was passed to Timmy, and he was supplied with money to take a short vacation.

Rumor saith not where Timmy's troop commander was through all this. I never heard him mentioned by any one concerned with the thing, so I've come to the conclusion that he was pretty much of a figurehead and well under the colonel's thumb. Timmy would have had it in for himself worse for breaking arrest than for stealing beer if this T. C. hadn't been fixed.

You can see the captain's weakness all through from the word go. The colonel probably had Timmy detailed to that troop for that very reason.

Breaking arrest was easy. Being a sergeant, Timmy simply had to put on his cits and walk out while the sergeant in charge of quarters was otherwise engaged.

Right here Timmy began to get reckless—goodness knows why. He was just about as far removed from the Sunday-school kid I knew in the office as heaven is from the other place. He walked out as per program, but instead of going to get Milly and taking her for a little joyjaunt, as the colonel had suggested, he went and bought two automatics, trekked over the bridge into Mexico, and started drinking at some rotten little booze-joint, the Cantina of the Purified Saints, I think it was called.

After a while, a gang of greasers who thought that there might be a bunch of money on him got him playing monte or craps or poker or something. Anyhow, they had stacked the cards or loaded the dice on him, and were getting the *dinero* in large gobs. Purified saints, it would appear, are risky folks to play with. It took some time for a greenhorn like Timmy to *sabe* their game; but when he did there was quick action.

It's often the tenderest tenderfoot that gets gay with the guns. In just about two minutes the *cantina* was blue with pistol smoke, three of the purified saints had gone to join their brothers above, and Timmy had broken out and was racing for the bridge with the dividing line between Mexico and the United States drawn through the middle of it.

He backed across, shooting the automatics with both hands—he had ten shots apiece in them. The greasers followed, shrieking and yelling curses; but they

didn't dare advance over the border-line of the bridge, for fear of the patrol that was always there. They shot, though, and one of the bullets plugged Timmy in the foot, breaking one or two of the small bones.

One of the bridge-guard, from another regiment and not knowing Timmy, got him taken to his apartment. Timmy had sense enough to give the driver the address. There poor little Milly put him to bed, cried over him, got a doctor, and telephoned for her father.

The old man came out as soon as he could. He was in a tearing temper at Timmy; and when Timmy owned up to the whole story, killing the greasers and all, the colonel could hardly hold himself in. The affair was bound to make a stir just at this time, when relations between the two countries were so strained. An American soldier shooting three Mexicans in a booze-joint, and backing out home with his guns barking! The old man could see all sorts of trouble coming, and he cursed the day on which Timmy came into the family.

"There's just one chance to get you out of this. The Mexican authorities will be coming after you soon. They can easily trace you through the guard at the bridge. The place for you, and the *only* place, is Canada, just as quick as you can make it!"

"But, father, his commission! We can't lose that!"

"Commission! That's gone long ago. He'll be lucky to save his neck. There's only one thing I can do for you now—finance the Canadian trip. You'd better make it the first train out."

And so Timmy had to beat it while the going was good. His foot wasn't very bad, and that night he took the north-bound train. Milly went back to the post with her father.

"You're my daughter now," he reminded her. "You're not an enlisted man's wife. Tim's out of the army."

"Yes," sobbed poor Milly, "with 'deserted' after his name and officers of the law after him! Oh, Timmy, Timmy!"

"Never mind, little girl, let the scoundrel go. You can soon get a divorce for desertion, and start life over. We'll make you happy again."

"Dad, are you crazy? *Divorce Timmy!* Why, you know he's *really* all right.

He'll make good yet. He'll send for me to come to him."

"That all sounds very fine, and I hate to dash your hopes, my dear; but it's not much use to expect anything from him, after this."

"Dad," she said, "you are all wrong. Do you know why Timmy hasn't proven up? Have you any suspicion that you are the one that made all the trouble by not allowing him to go it alone, like any other man? You've coddled him up and you've pulled, pulled, pulled for him till we're all laughing-stocks. You've taken every bit of self-reliance out of him. Oh, I know I didn't see it that way at first. I was glad enough to get your help; but I didn't know then what it was going to do to Timmy. I had just been hoping and dreaming; but I'm awake now, and I know just what we're going to do. What did you think I married him for, and went through all those dreadful months for, anyway? Because I loved him, and because I had eyes to see the man of him underneath the little meek shell. When you suggested his enlisting, I thought it was a good way; but, as I said before, I didn't know all that enlistment under those conditions meant. Don't you dare say another word against Timmy. He's going to make good, I tell you! Don't I know him better than any one? He's going to be a real man instead of a puppet for you to jump about; and when he sends for me I shall go to him!"

III

ABOUT the time all this happened I was up in Winnipeg, where I'd been sent to confer with the Western Canadian branch of the John B. Armor Company about the contracts for some big office-buildings that we were going to do there. Winnipeg was having a building boom just then. Houses and big steel structures were going up like mushrooms, and we were getting a good slice of what was going.

One morning I was in the shack behind the big new Mayfair Building, which we were putting up, going over some specifications with the architect in charge, when who should blow in but Timmy!

"Well, where in the name of Texas did you come from?" I said.

"Just been chased over the border," says he. "I'm a desperate criminal, wanted for killing three greasers in the

Cantina of the Purified Saints, El Porco, Mexico."

He grinned cheerfully.

"Get out! That's a fairy tale!"

"It's the truth! What else would I be here for?"

Killing three greasers! Timmy, the Sunday-school kid! That was my first intimation of the change in him, and it staggered me—that and the fact that he took it so calmly.

After the first good look at him, I could see that the Sunday-school Timmy had vanished; but just what had taken his place I was not so sure. He was bigger physically in every way—wider, taller, and better set up. His face had a good, healthy color, instead of its old pasty hue. I had him to lunch with me, and he put me wise to the whole story up to date, from the time when he eloped with Milly.

By the time he finished, we had come to the coffee. I was so taken up by what he told me that I put five lumps of sugar into my demi-tasse, though I never take more than half of one.

"Well," said I, "now that you are safe in Canada, what are your plans? Was it anything that brought you here to Winnipeg?"

"Oh, no," said he. "I just came by way of Minneapolis, and this was the nearest and most convenient Canadian town. I haven't any definite plan, except this—I'm going out and hunt for a job—don't care just what it is so it's a job, and a man's work, and on my own—and I'm going to save my money and send for Milly as soon as I can. It may not be a swell home I can give her, but—she'll want to come. She's the only person in the world who has any faith in me, and she's the very one I've handed the rottenest deals to. Good Lord! When I think of all I've made that girl suffer, it—it makes me cringe 'way down deep in my soul. Fool, cad, coward—those are just the beginnings of what I call myself. There aren't any words for it; I can only think it and writhe. Every night I've lain awake in my berth and thought and thought. But it all came to the same thing; I kept cursing myself afresh. I had no idea I'd see you up here. I just came exploring down this street, and saw the old company's sign up above the shack. I took it for a good omen; and when I saw you I knew my luck had

turned. What about that job I'm hunting? You'll give me one, won't you? I don't care if it's just a common day laborer's."

"I'll do better than laborer by you," I said, for I was impressed with the boy's earnestness. "I'll make you timekeeper on the Mayfair job. Ours has just given notice—has a better opening out in Regina. This is no swell thing I'm offering you; it's rough work, but it pays twenty-five dollars a week. Now don't jump down my throat; I'm not doing this as a favor. We need a timekeeper, and you've got to deliver the goods or get fired."

"Twenty-five dollars a week! Gee, that is a strike! It's about what I was getting a month in the army."

"Yes, and look what else you were getting. When it comes to shelling out for food, clothes, light, fuel, and house-rent, you won't have much left. A trifle over a hundred a month isn't much for two folks like you two to live on in an expensive town like this. House-rent here is something fierce."

"Keep your shirt on! I know it. I won't need much clothes, except just enough to cover me and keep warm, and I'm going to hang out at some cheap joint where I'll get board and rooms, just like the mechanics on the job. This 'll be my last good feed for a long time, I guess; and if I don't save sixty to seventy dollars every month, you can lynch me! Now tell me, when do I start work, who do I take my orders from, and what do I have to do?"

"You can start to-morrow if you like. Rafferty's wild to be off. Your orders—such as they are—you'll take from our superintendent on the job, Grimes, but you'll be pretty much your own boss. Your work will be to keep count of the time of every man working on the job; and mind you keep it straight, for pay-rolls are made out from your daily reports."

"But gee, how do I do that? Do I put it down every time I see them, or do they have to punch a time-clock?"

"No; it's a check system. Each man had a number and a little brass check, like a small baggage-check, with his number on it. You give it to him as he comes to work; he hands it back at noon, takes it again at one, and gives it up to you at five, or whenever he quits work. You

keep a report of it all; there are regular ruled blanks. From them we can tell just how many hours' pay is due each man. It's easy work, in a way, but you mustn't let them think you're easy, or they'll put it over you all over the place. They'll be skipping out time, and getting other fellows to deposit their checks, and working all sorts of graft. You've got to learn the faces first, so that no put-up job can get by you. Be at the shack to-morrow morning at a quarter to seven, and I'll have Rafferty stay the half day so as to give you a fair start."

IV

TIMMY jumped into his job with both feet, and made good at it quickly. He had always had a good memory for faces; and now that his bread and butter depended on it to a large extent, he easily cultivated it. It wasn't long before he had every one of the men's mugs catalogued in a mental rogues' gallery. In the first week he succeeded in blocking several put-up games, and in docking several dollars off the pay of a bunch of carpenters and plasterers who thought he looked easy. I hadn't put him wise to any of their stock schemes to evade work and get pay, but he seemed naturally wise—which rather surprised me.

"It was being in the army did it," he informed me. "I got on to so many tricks of shirkers and quartermasters' mugs, and put up so many of 'em myself, to tell the truth, that I seem to be able to smell out bunco schemes like a bird-dog does partridges."

Being out on his own certainly seemed to be a good thing for Timmy. The fellows in the shack all appeared to take to him and accept him on the level; and after the first skirmishes the men did, too. He was able to meet all sorts on their own ground, and was as good friends with Henry the cement-mixer and Roderick the foreman plasterer—who, by the way, got twenty-five dollars a week more than Timmy—as he was with Hadly, the chief electrician, and McHaffie, the architect's superintendent.

I wasn't able to be around much to watch his game, having to spend most of my time at our office up-town, but Grimes used to keep me posted. He said Timmy would sit on his stool in his little partitioned-off box at one end of the shack,

with its little wicket where the men passed in their checks, and the board with its numbered hooks and checks hanging on the wall at his side; and when he wasn't busy he would keep everybody in roars of laughter. He had surely picked up a collection of tales in his army years. There are all sorts of yarns—printable and the opposite—going in contractors' shacks, and up to that time McHaffie's line of Scotch stuff had been considered the best ever by the assembled experts; but now they had to take off Mac's laurel wreath and put it on Timmy.

And that wasn't all. Timmy knew when to keep quiet and work, too; and when the reports were all made up and the men checked off there was usually time for a long, long letter to Milly. He never missed a day writing her, no matter what happened. There were plenty of chances for drinks, if Timmy would take them, but he always declined.

"You see," he once said to me, "I've made up my mind to cut out the booze. Not that I'm soured on it, for I'm not, if a man can do it decently and not be a D. F., as I was; but it costs too much money, and if they treat me I'll have to treat back. I'm not allowing myself any luxuries these days, except a little smokin' for the old pipe."

He was staying out at a five-dollar-a-week workmen's boarding-house, and living on chicory, bread, oleomargarin, and fried punk. He was wearing fringed trousers that hitched up his legs as if they were frightened of the ground, thick-soled felt brogans, a workman's sheepskin-lined canvas jacket fastened with metal clasps, horse-hide mittens, and a black cloth cap with a peak and ear-flaps. It's cold in Winnipeg in winter, as you probably know; goes down to forty below sometimes. He looked just like any one of a hundred workmen we had on the job; and he had grown big and husky, and filled his clothes out more than ever.

Plenty of timekeepers doll up quite fancy, and think themselves just like the pictures of smart suits in the back of the magazines; but Timmy wasn't looking for style nowadays. When I thought of his exquisite finickiness in the New York office, I had to acknowledge that he had gone a long way. He often used to walk along the snowy streets with me, utterly unconscious of his appearance, or of any

discrepancy between himself and me, with my fur-lined, mink-collared broadcloth overcoat and mink cap.

I got to like him more and more. I was sorry that after about four months I got orders to go down to Minneapolis to sign up for some work there, because Timmy was planning to bring Milly up in another month, and was hunting for a little house in an inexpensive part of the city. I wanted to see that girl. I had lots more respect for her than I used to have, and I wanted to see how their housekeeping turned out, though I hadn't much fear—now.

I was planning to give them my belated wedding-present, too—some furniture and stuff they could use in the house—goodness knows they had everything to get. But just the very night before I left, as I was packing up my last loose odds and ends—bachelors who are not extra fussy don't have a great deal of packing to do—in walks a glorified sort of Timmy with a letter and a telegram.

His face was fairly shining with joy; there was a sort of inner light that made an aura of happiness all about him. I sat up, I can tell you.

"What is it? What is it all about?"

He tried to say so many things at once that I couldn't make out a word, except something about "Uncle Job." Finally he pushed the letter into my hand, and managed to get out coherently:

"It came this morning!"

I read the letter, and was almost as glad as he was. An old relative, Uncle Job, had left him a clean half-million, and it was all ready and waiting for him to draw on. The old man, who had been rather out of touch with Timmy's side of the family, had died some time before, and his lawyers had been trying to find Timmy.

"Never knew there was so much money in your family," said I.

"Never thought much about the old chap myself. I'd almost forgotten he existed. None of the rest of us ever had more'n a couple of hundred at a time laid by. Why he ever picked *me*, beats me; but I'm glad enough not to look for reasons. He's left some to my brothers, too, you see. He was as rich as French pastry, that old man."

"What are you going to do, Mr. Rockefeller?"

"Well, I've a few plans—but say, I know what I'm *not* goin' to do, and that's get the high-living and high-spending habit. We can live in great comfort, thank God, but I'm not going to quit working. Why, living off that money and idling would be just like having a pull all over again! I've been keeping my eyes open since I've been in Winnipeg, and I think I'll settle down right here and go into the contracting business on my own. There's splendid opportunity in a place like this. Yes, sir, I'm going to keep right on hustling—after a two weeks' holiday for a second honeymoon. I wired Milly this morning to come up—wired the money for her expenses, too. Here's her answer—she caught the next train, and she'll be here day after to-morrow. Isn't that great?"

He grinned radiantly, and was talking again before I could get in a word.

"That's really what the money means to me—being able to be with Milly and make it up to her for all I made her go through. Look at all I've done to her—and what a girl she is! She's *made* me! I was going to send for her soon, anyway, you know. I could have kept her comfortably, though I couldn't have given her all she ought to have; but now, thank God, I can do more for her than any of her people ever did!"

"Did you tell Milly of the legacy in your wire?" I asked.

"No. I thought I'd keep it and tell it to her—meet her at the station all diked up in glad rags, dazzle her with my brilliance, and then tell her in the taxi on the way to the hotel. Don't you think that would be great?"

"If I were you," I said, "I'd meet her just the way you are now. If she's the girl I think she is, she'll want to see you like that—just the way you've been working. Meet her—just go to the station and take her home with you. She'll want to see that boarding-house, too, I know. Then you can tell her, and change to your glad rags, and go to your swell hotel."

"By Jove, you're right! She *will* like it. I'll do it!"

And he did.

These are the three stages of Timmy that I know. I have happy letters from him occasionally, and I think he is entering a fourth stage; but his real adventures are over, for he is as sure of himself now as any one can be. Even if that legacy hadn't come along just as it did, things would probably have been just the same. Wasn't it Kipling who said somewhere:

When a man does good work, nine times out of ten there is a woman behind it, and the tenth time—he doesn't do it.

NEW YEAR'S LEAVES

So brittle and so fragile are

The New Year's leaves I turn,
They're very apt to break in two;

But annually I yearn
To start anew in January
With resolutions honest, very!

Thus every New Year heretofore,
As everybody should,
I've resolutions made galore
To prudent be and good;
But being good's a lonely road,
With wakened conscience for one's load!

Therefore with careful thought I've planned
A different course this year.
'Tis this—to make no promise that
Might conscience cause one tear.
Having decided not to make any,
'Twill be too easy not to break any!

Mazie V. Caruthers

CHEERING BILLINGS

SHOWING HOW TO MAKE YOUR FRIEND ENJOY A FUNNY PLAY

BY FRANK X. FINNEGAN



WHEN I like a show, I'm not stingy about it. I don't sneak away into a dark corner and try to remember the jokes, in order to have a second-hand laugh by myself. Quite otherwise — I talk about the piece with the sapient air of a first-nighter. I refer to the comedian by his first name, and advise my friends to go to see the show before it is too late. Several times it has been too late. The sheriff got there first.

If I had not been so generous about sharing the mad hilarity of "The Girl With the Curl," I shouldn't have taken Billings to see it. I liked the piece when I saw it by myself, the week before. In my wild enthusiasm, I pounded a black and blue spot on the back of a perfect stranger who sat in front of me. I'm sure I appreciated the show more than he did. Any one seeing both our faces when he turned around from time to time would have thought so.

But to return to Billings. I met him at the club one evening, looking very much down in the mouth. Stocks had gone up, or down, and he was depressed. It doesn't seem to make any particular difference to some fellows which way stocks go, they can be ruined so thoroughly in either case. I don't pretend to understand it; but I felt sorry for old Billings. When a man has lost his last nickel in Oatmeal Crackers, Preferred, he wants cheering up. I know I should.

"Look here, Billings," I said in my generous, whole-hearted way. "There's no sense in your sitting around in a blue funk like this. You'll get insomnia, or water on the knee, or something, from brooding. You ought to go and see a good funny show, and forget your troubles."

He blinked at me owlishly.

"There are no funny shows any more," he said. "The last one was 'The Pirates of Penzance.'"

I smiled indulgently. One has to make allowances for the state of mind of a man who has been swamped in Oatmeal Crackers, Preferred.

"Have you seen 'The Girl With the Curl'?" I asked.

Billings shook his head and sighed miserably.

"Then come and see it," I urged. "It's the funniest show ever."

He came. I got seats well down in front, so that he would miss none of the jokes. Nothing is more annoying than to have your favorite jest, which you have waked at night to laugh over, get mixed up in the overcoat of some late arrival crowding in on your toes. I wanted to see Billings rouse himself from the oatmeal dust and have a good laugh.

There was nothing very humorous about the opening chorus. There never is. Some people think the only funny thing about opening choruses is that managers persist in having them. I don't. I've learned the professional secret.

They have the opening chorus in order to delay the plot as long as possible. If it began right at the start there wouldn't be enough plot left to hold out to the finish. This would cause a terrible mix-up in the last act. In fact, the last act would have to end before it finished. Any one can see what that would mean.

The more or less young ladies of the chorus finally ran themselves into exhaustion and staggered off the stage. Then the maid came out to dust the furniture. You know, every show starts with a maid dusting off the chairs for the actors. I can't

understand why it isn't done early in the evening, before the audience arrives, but it isn't. Possibly the manager wants it understood that he is giving a perfectly clean performance.

When the fun began, I told Billings what was going to happen just before it occurred. I didn't want him to miss anything. People around us were saying "Sh-sh-sh!" at me, but I didn't care. I glared right back at them. Some people in a theater think of nothing but their own selfish enjoyment. They have no regard for anybody else's pleasure. It's absurd!

The piece went on hilariously, but Billings tucked his mantle of gloom up around his neck and sank his chin a little deeper into it. He fairly exuded the aroma of Oatmeal Crackers, Preferred.

Once he turned to me, and I had a wild hope that he was going to laugh. It sickened and died when I saw his face. He only asked me what time it was. I began to feel that I was guilty of keeping him up late.

When I laughed, he looked at me in surprise. Yes, and so did other people sitting near us. They seemed to have come to attend the obsequies. It was quite discouraging, but I kept at it.

"That fellow in the waiter's suit turns out to be the duke's son in the third act," I whispered to Billings. "He's in disguise, you know."

I thought he ought to be glad to know that in advance; it made the plot so much clearer. But he only asked me why the dickens the duke didn't recognize his own son. He said every one else in the piece seemed to be on to the fellow.

It's no use trying to cheer up that sort of a man. He has no imagination. I believe he would have been just as well satisfied if the duke *had* recognized his son and ended the show right there.

At the end of the first act the duke's son elopes with the girl in a motor-car. Just before the start the comedian hooks up the duke's wheel-chair to the car, and the nobleman starts off with the runaways. It's awfully funny. Any one can see that.

I shrieked with laughter the first time I saw it. Everybody does. I told Billings about it long in advance. I begged him to keep his eye on the wheel-chair. And yet—will you believe me?—when the fun started he was figuring up something on the back of his program! He seemed to be stifling a yawn. It may have been a smile, but I doubt it. There would be no sense in stifling that.

We went out into the lobby between the acts. I didn't want to go. I preferred to sit and talk about the show; but Billings said people would think we didn't know how to behave in a theater if we sat still.

"How do you like it?" I asked him when we got out.

"Why, it's all right, I guess, for this kind of a show," he said. "I wonder if they have a telephone here! I was thinking about calling up some people on that real-estate deal I've been in."

We didn't go back for the second act. I left Billings getting a Turkish bath in the telephone-booth, and went home. The next time I take a tired business man to the theater I shall select "King Lear" or "Richard III." Then he can bathe in gloom and be happy.

SONG AND SILENCE

WHEN I was one and twenty,
And full of youth and pride,
I sang of loves a plenty—
The light-o'-loves that died.

But now, since life has given
The one love of the years,
I cannot tell of heaven
And how its light appears.

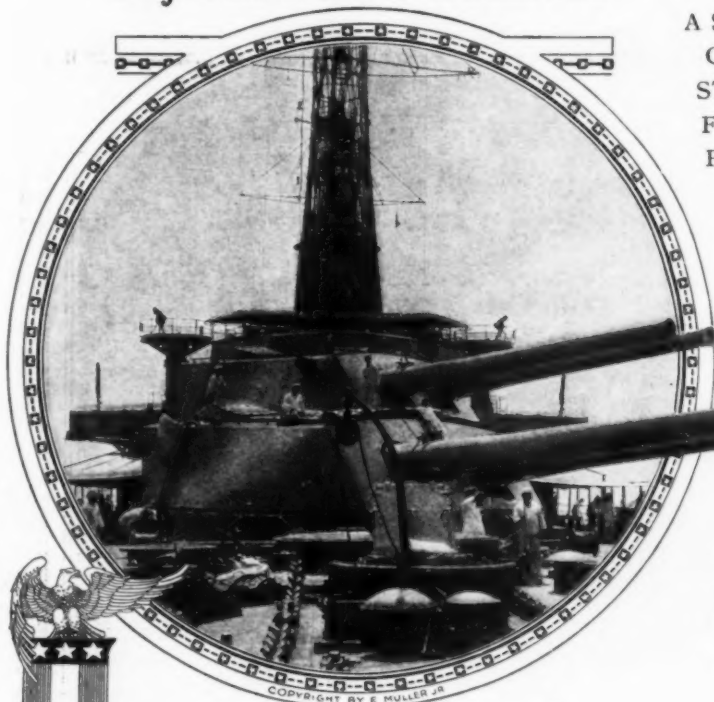
Rather, I live the glory,
My heart and spirit mute;
My glad days are the story,
My rapture is the lute.

Charles Hanson Towne

THE AMERICAN NAVY

By Judson C. Welliver

A STATEMENT OF
OUR PRESENT
STANDING AND
FUTURE PROS-
PECTS IN THE
RACE FOR
SEA POWER



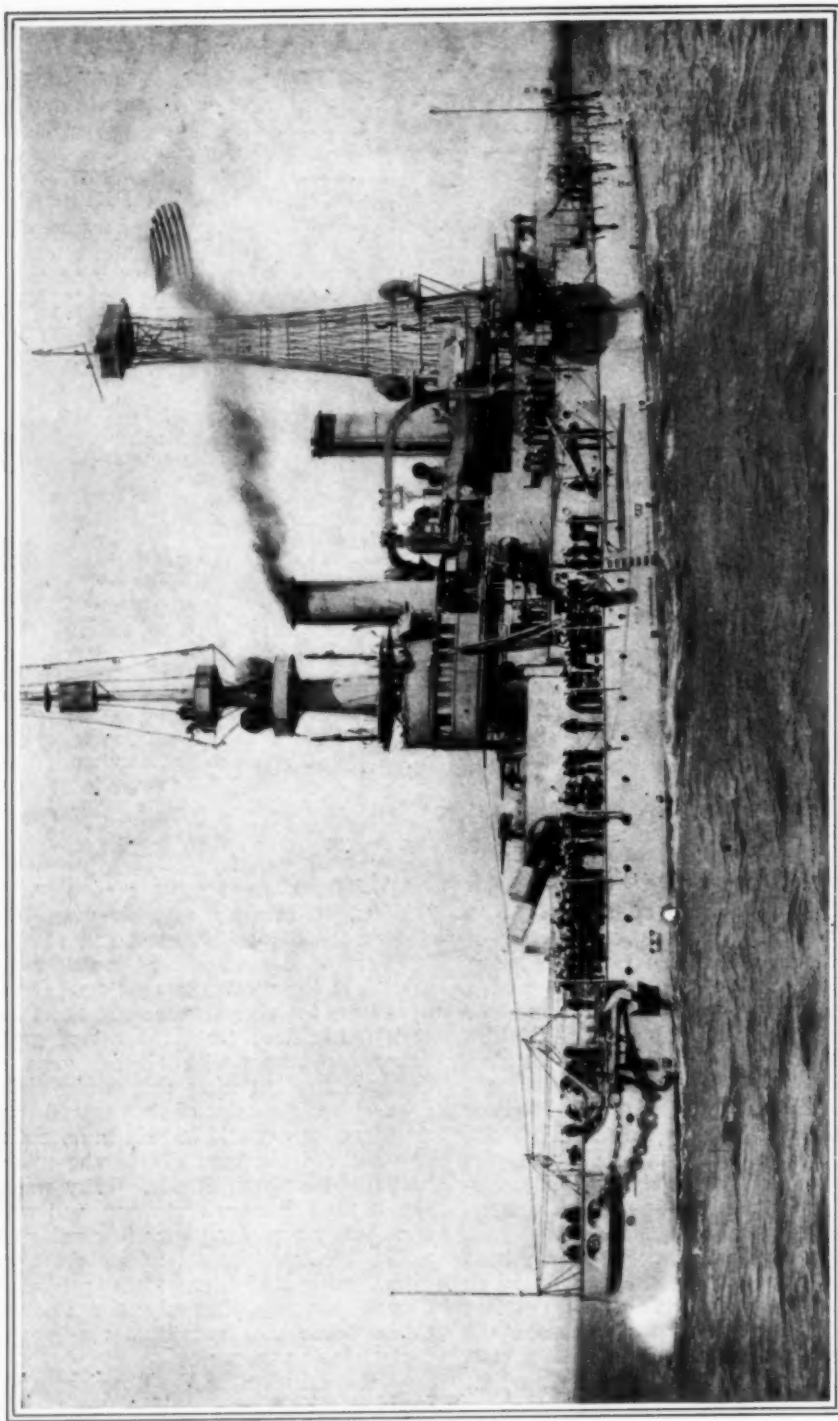
FORWARD DECK OF THE
BATTLE-SHIP NEW
YORK, SHOWING TUR-
RETS OF THE LATEST
STYLE AND THE NEW
FOURTEEN-INCH GUNS

ON the early evening of Sunday, November 1, in the South Pacific Ocean, off the coast of Chile, a squadron of five German cruisers overhauled three British cruisers and a converted merchant ship. There followed an engagement in which the British ships were decisively worsted. They lost, according to the analysis which naval authorities have made of the battle, because British vessels carrying a small number of big guns and a large number of small guns were pitted against German vessels carrying, as their main batteries, large complements of large-caliber guns.

In that engagement naval experts have found a lesson for the study of American maritime leaders. For they point out that the exact weaknesses which caused the British defeat are also, to a great extent, the weaknesses of the American navy as compared with other navies.

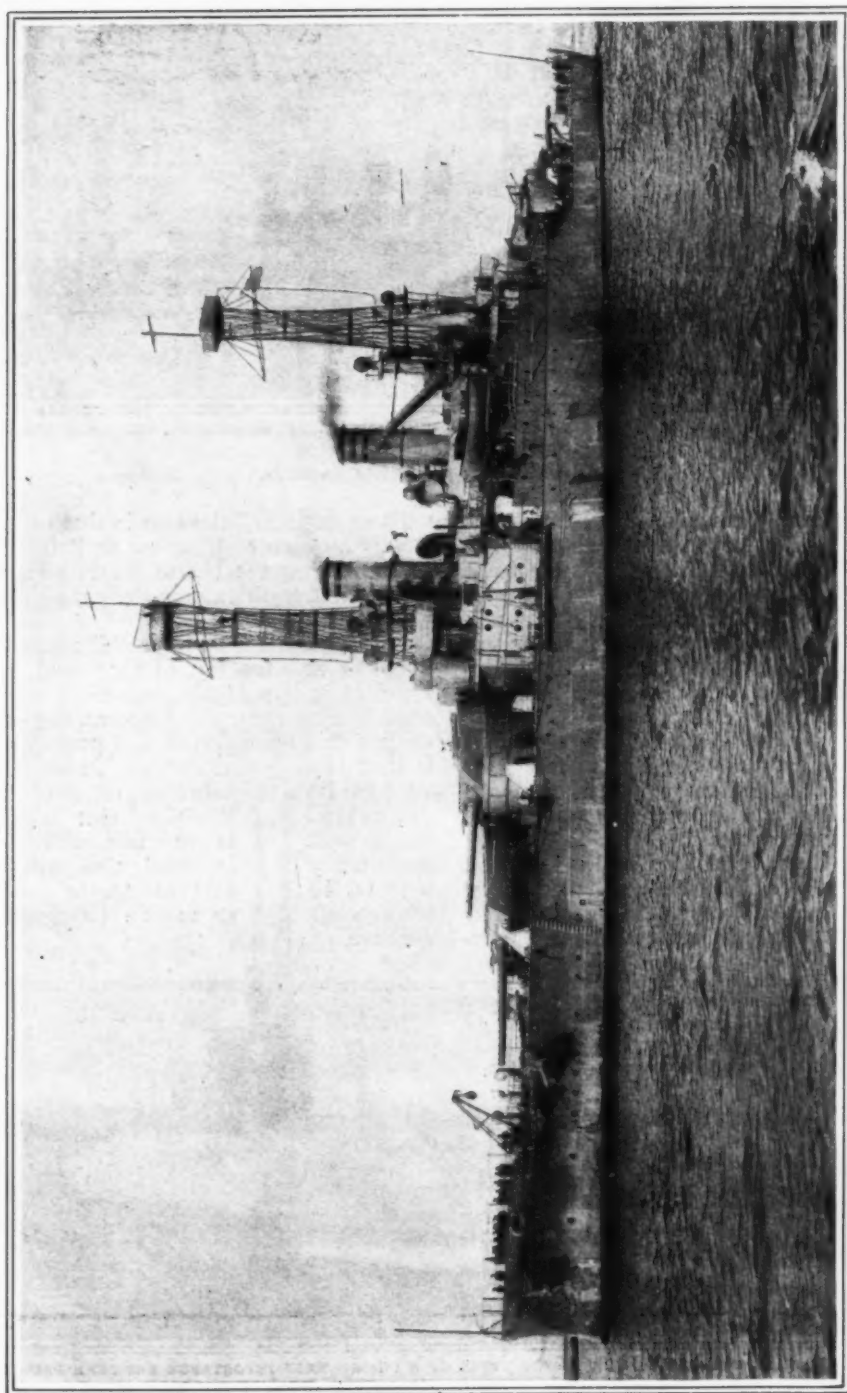
We have a large number of old-style battle-ships, carrying as their main batteries a few first-caliber guns, and a larger number of second-caliber; battle-ships, that is, of the predreadnought era. Other navies are building dreadnought fleets for their battle line; that is, fleets of great armored monsters with all big guns in their primary batteries; ships which, in a fight with battle-ships of the preponderant American type, would be able to do exactly what the Germans did in the recent battle of the South Pacific. They would choose their distance and range, and with their vastly superior power in great guns would hammer the American ships to pieces without letting them get close enough to use effectively the smaller-caliber guns that constitute the greater part of their armament.

Is this criticism of the American navy justified?



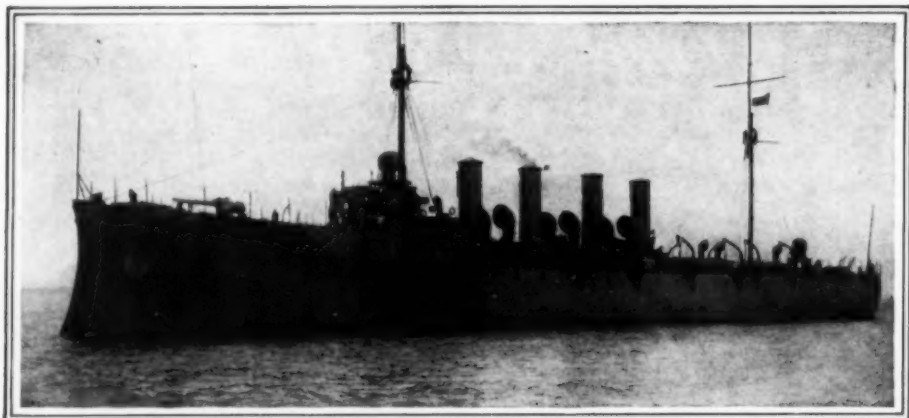
THE FAMOUS BATTLE-SHIP OREGON, WHICH DID SUCH CONSPICUOUS SERVICE IN THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO—WITH HER TEN THOUSAND TONS DISPLACEMENT, AND CARRYING FOUR THIRTEEN-INCH GUNS, SHE IS OUTCLASSED BY THE DREADNOUGHTS OF TO-DAY

From a copyrighted photograph by E. Muller, Jr.



THE BATTLE-SHIP MICHIGAN, OF SIXTEEN THOUSAND TONS DISPLACEMENT, AND CARRYING EIGHT 12-INCH GUNS—THE MICHIGAN AND HER SISTER SHIP, THE SOUTH CAROLINA, BEGUN IN 1906, WERE THE FIRST AMERICAN DREADNOUGHTS

From a copyrighted photograph by E. Muller, Jr.



THE CHESTER, A SCOUT CRUISER OF THIRTY-SEVEN HUNDRED TONS DISPLACEMENT, BUILT FOR SPEED RATHER THAN GUN POWER

From a copyrighted photograph by E. Muller, Jr.

In recent years there has been a vast amount of more or less haphazard and miscellaneous fault-finding with our navy. Certain it is that whereas less than ten years ago the American navy was universally rated as second in power, it is now classed as third among the maritime countries, and commonly declared to be on the way to fourth rank.

The present is a peculiarly opportune time for a survey of the plain facts concerning American naval power.

What is our need of sea power, and what do we possess? What is our rank among the naval nations, and is it what it ought to be? Why have we fallen in less than a decade from second to third rank? Is it not true that our national and inter-

national responsibilities have in that period greatly increased? If so, are we living up to them when the United States permits its naval strength to drop, by comparison with other countries?

It seems obvious that our obligations to ourselves and the rest of the world demand at least a highly respectable naval establishment under the American flag—so obvious that discussion of that proposition is hardly necessary. Time was when our isolation was esteemed our security. We hoped that nobody would want to interfere with us; imagined that nobody would be able to get to us in force enough to make interference effective.



THE SUBMARINE E 2, ONE OF THE NEWER TYPES OF A CLASS WHOSE IMPORTANCE HAS BEEN PROVED IN THE WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND GERMANY

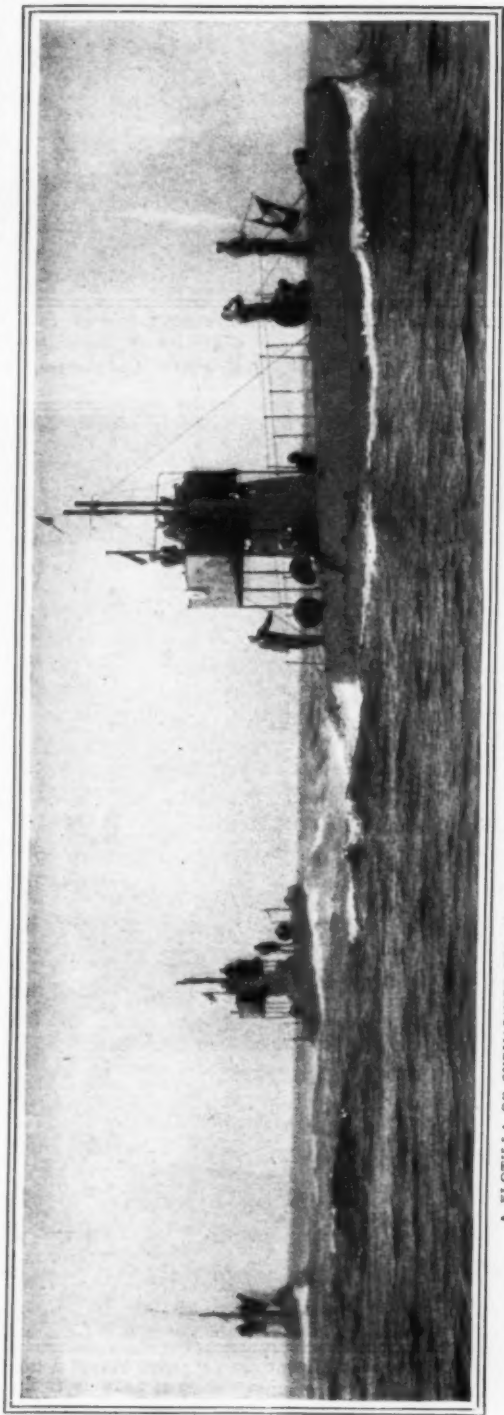
From a copyrighted photograph by E. Muller, Jr.

But the era of isolation ended with the Spanish War, if indeed it did not end sooner. Long before that, our promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine had assumed in our behalf a certain responsibility for the whole of the New World. It had not required enforcement through more than diplomatic measures, but none the less it had at least twice menaced us with war—once in the case of the Maximilian episode in Mexico; again in the affair of Venezuela, under the Presidency of Mr. Cleveland.

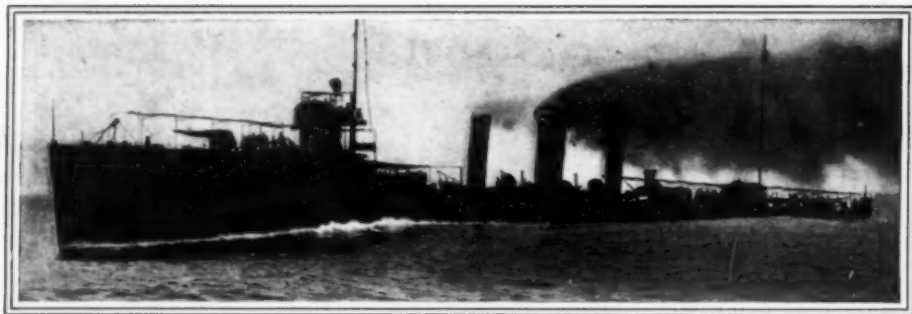
To-day our outposts are well-nigh as far-flung as those of any of the powers now warring in the Old World. We are in the Philippines; we have assumed a sponsorship for the "open door" in China that may be embarrassing; we hold islands widely scattered in the Pacific; we have two ocean frontages, on the two greatest oceans, to protect; we have built the Panama Canal, fortified it, and made ourselves responsible before the world for the maintenance of its neutrality and inviolability. We have vast commercial interests all over the world, and are at this very moment aspiring to a large expansion of them.

In a world, then, of such conditions as we see on every continent; in a world in which the crash of empires, the thunder of battle, the tramp of mighty armies, the smoke of combats more awful than ever were dreamed of before—in the world of this day and year, what is the obligation of such a nation as our own toward those instrumentalities to which it must look for preservation of its place, its peace, its dignity, its part in the councils that must at last end the era of blood-letting and horror?

It seems unnecessary to suggest that if it has been worth our while, as a nation, to build and maintain a navy in times of profound peace, it is worth while in times like the present to consider

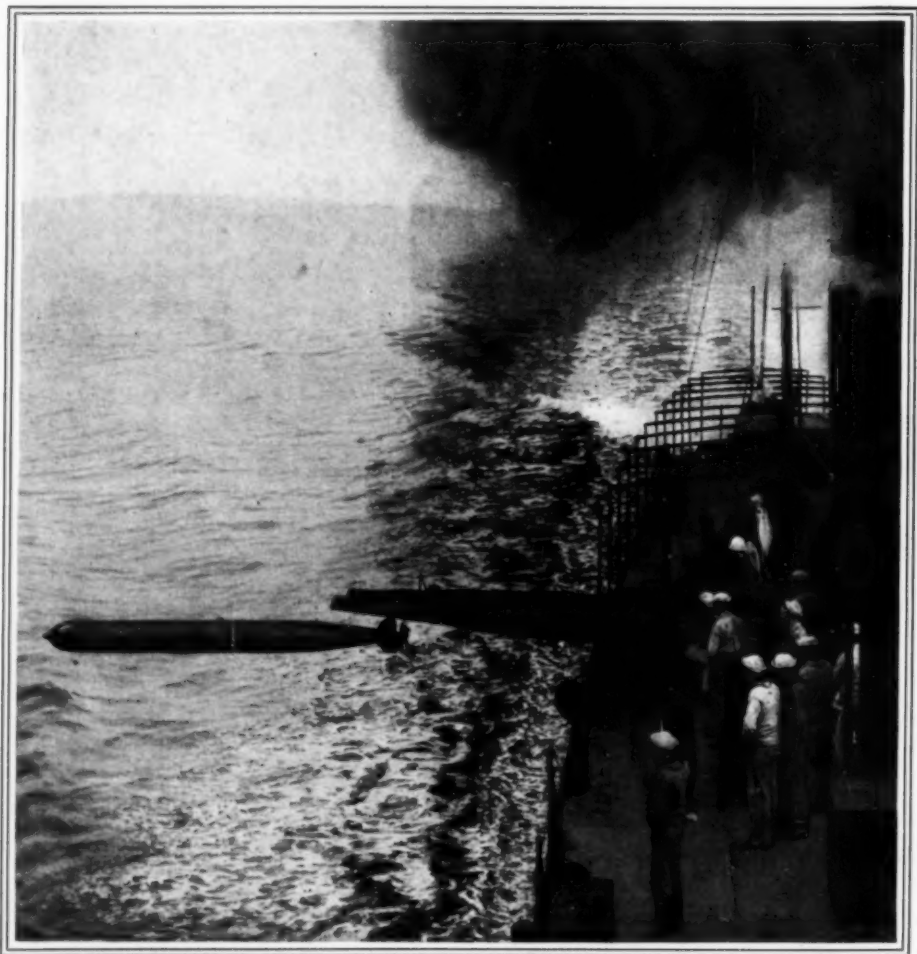


A FLOTILLA OF SUBMARINES STEAMING IN COLUMN FORMATION DURING MANEUVERS OFF THE MASSACHUSETTS COAST
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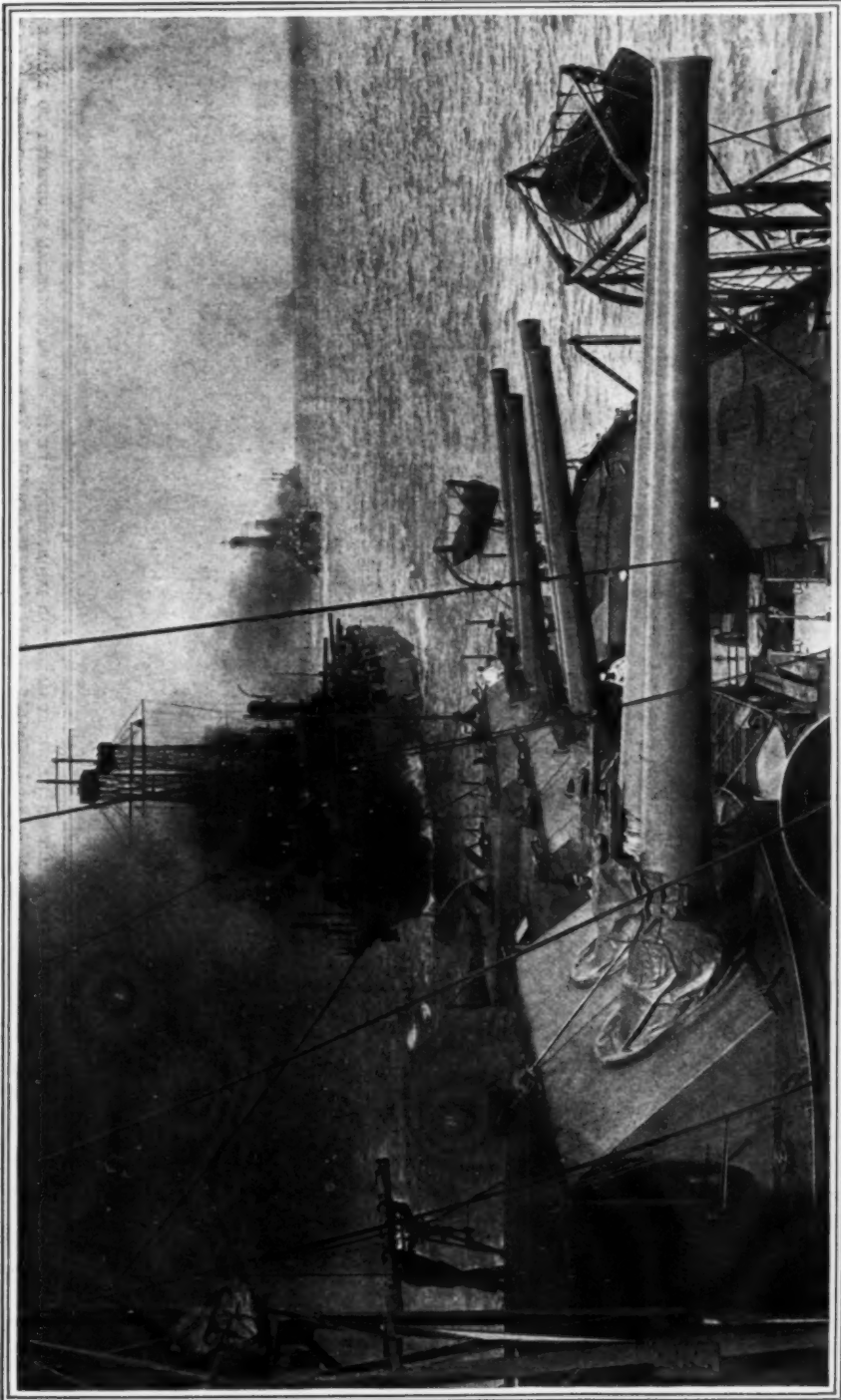
THE TORPEDO-BOAT DESTROYER STERRETT, ONE OF THE SWIFTEST VESSELS IN THE AMERICAN NAVY, STEAMING AT THIRTY KNOTS AN HOUR

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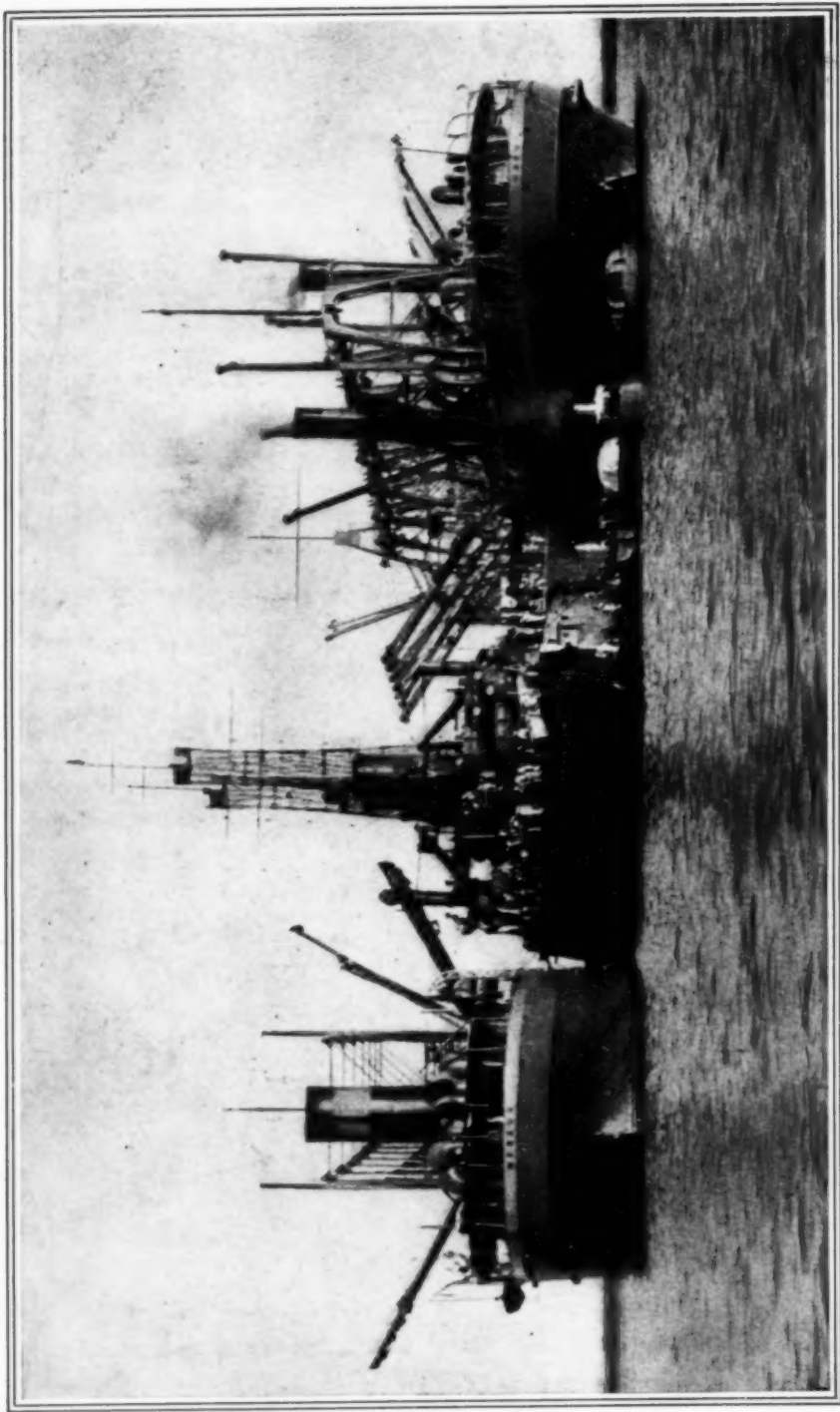
THE TORPEDO-BOAT DESTROYER PAULDING FIRING A TORPEDO WHILE MOVING AT FULL SPEED—THE TORPEDO IS SEEN AS IT LEAVES THE TUBE

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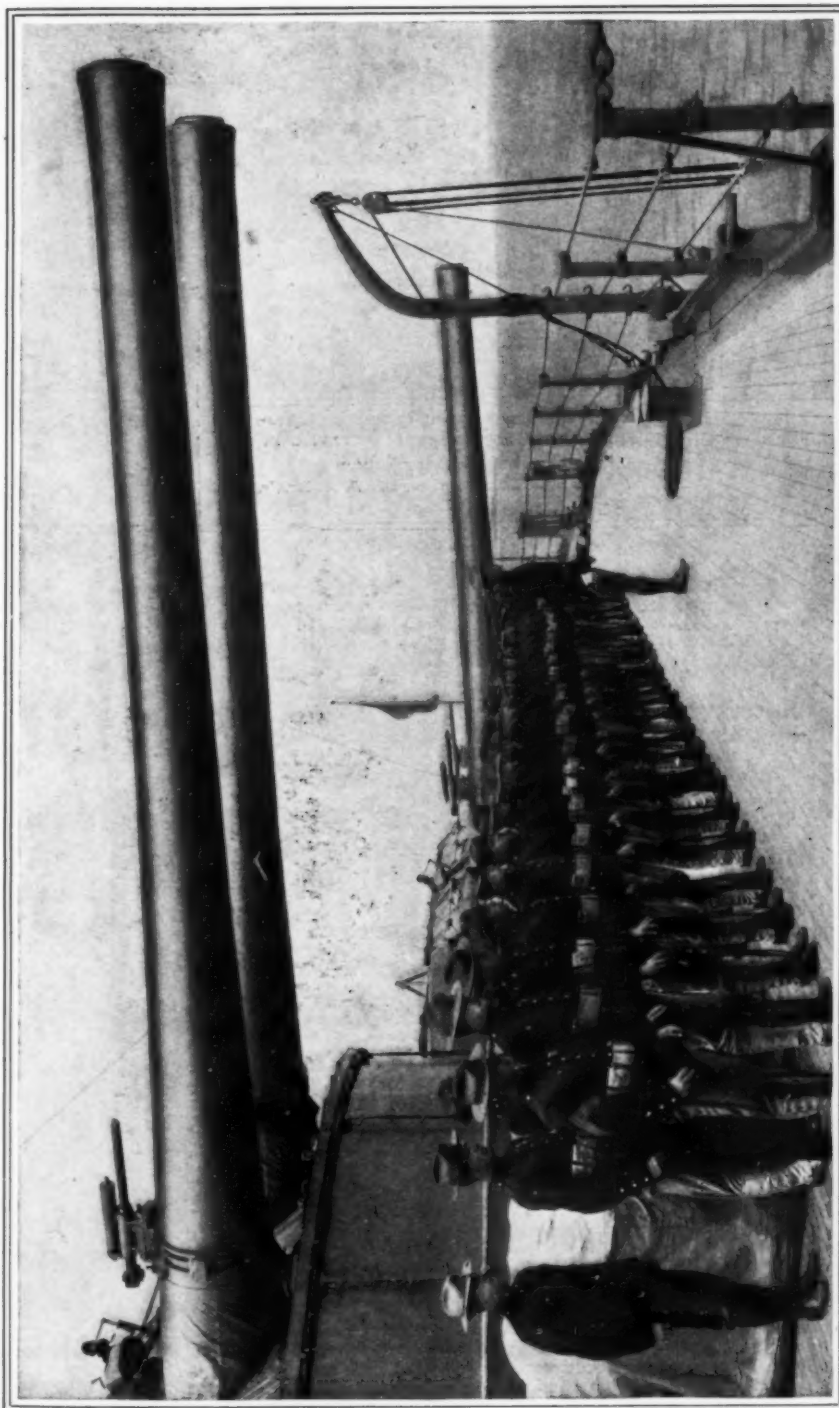
AMERICAN BATTLE-SHIPS STEAMING IN COLUMN FORMATION DURING WAR MANEUVERS—IN THE FOREGROUND IS THE AFTER-DECK OF THE NORTH DAKOTA, SHOWING SIX OF HER TWELVE-INCH GUNS, MOUNTED IN THREE TURRETS—THE VESSEL FOLLOWING HER IS THE FLORIDA

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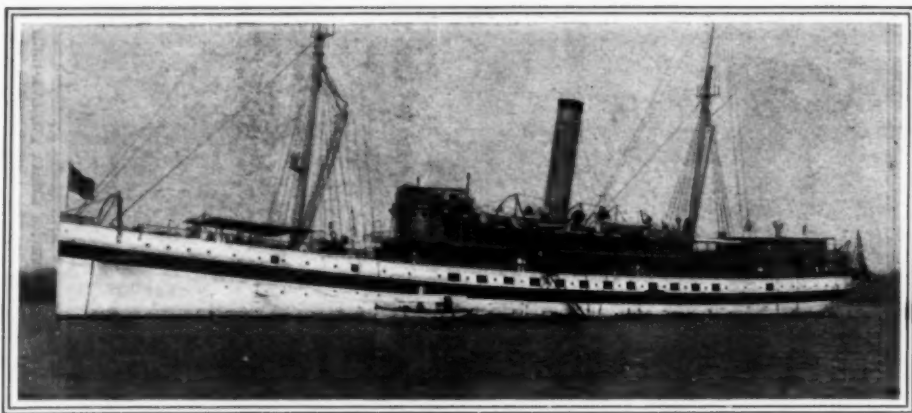
THE BATTLE-SHIP WYOMING COALING FROM TWO NAVY COLLIERIES, THE NEREUS AND THE JASON, WHICH ARE FITTED WITH SPECIAL EQUIPMENT TO ENABLE THEM TO FILL A WAR-SHIP'S BUNKERS IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME

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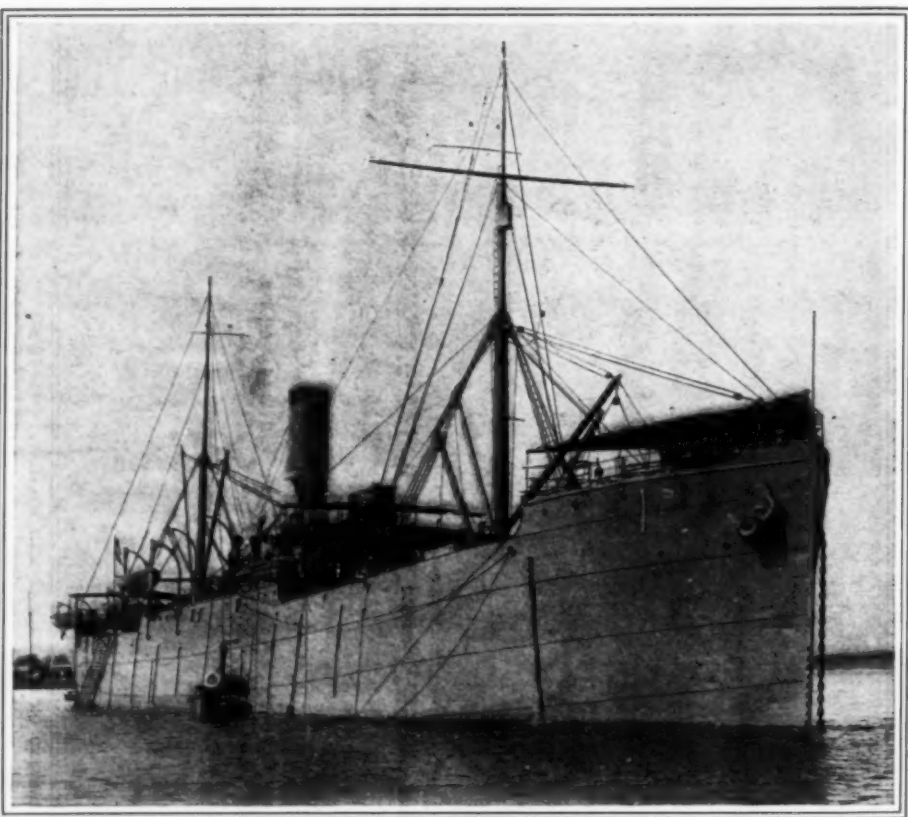
MARINES PARADED ON THE DECK OF THE WYOMING, IN READINESS FOR SHORE DUTY—THIS PHOTOGRAPH ALSO SHOWS THE BATTLE-SHIP'S GREAT TWELVE-INCH GUNS, TWELVE OF WHICH FORM HER MAIN BATTERY

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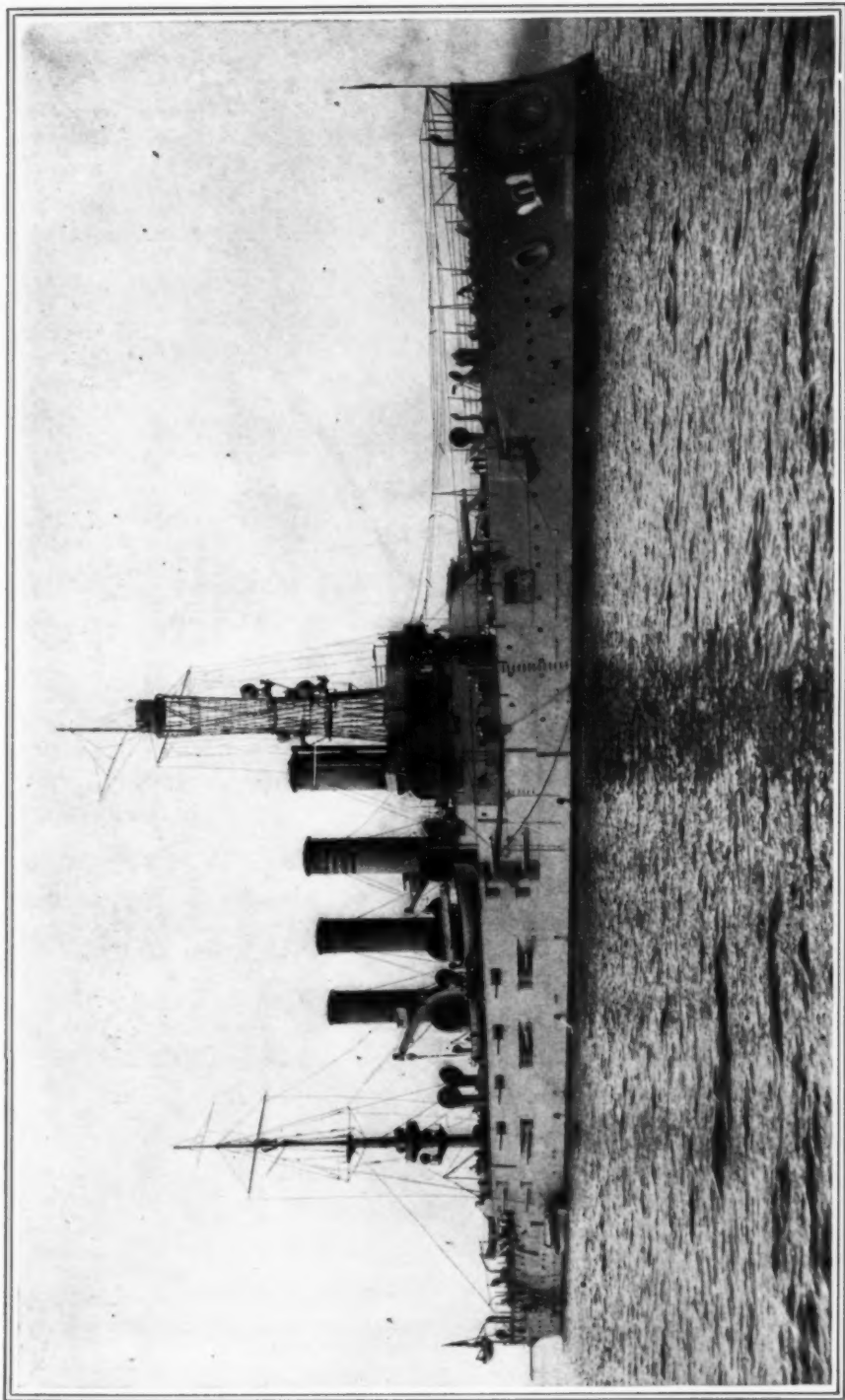
THE HOSPITAL SHIP SOLACE, WHICH PERFORMS THE DUTIES OF A FLOATING AMBULANCE FOR THE FIGHTING FLEET, AND WHICH SAW SERVICE IN THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

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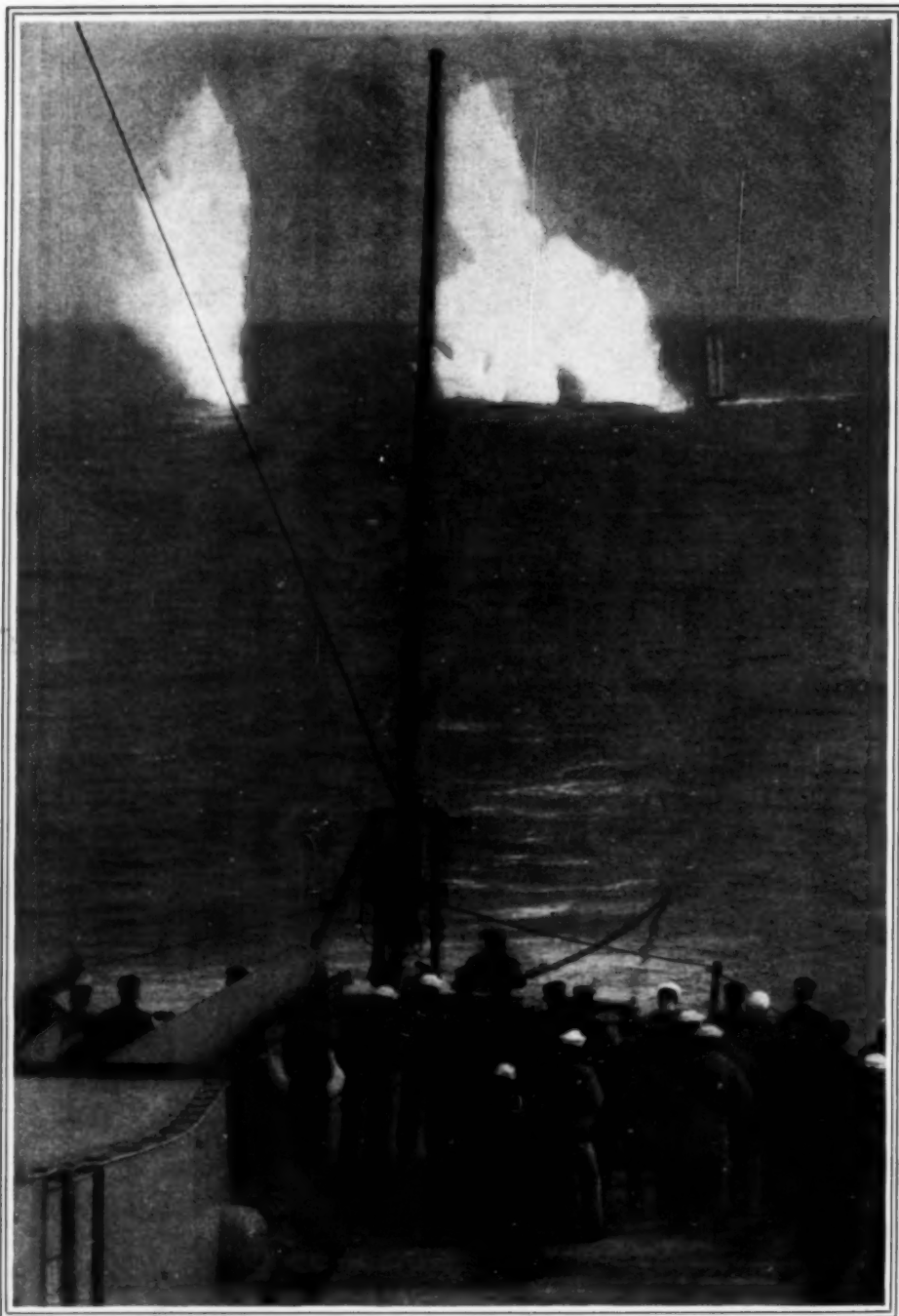
THE CELTIC, ATTACHED TO THE ATLANTIC FLEET AS A SUPPLY SHIP—FOR THE WORK OF AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGN, A FIGHTING FLEET NEEDS THE SERVICES OF MANY SUCH AUXILIARY VESSELS

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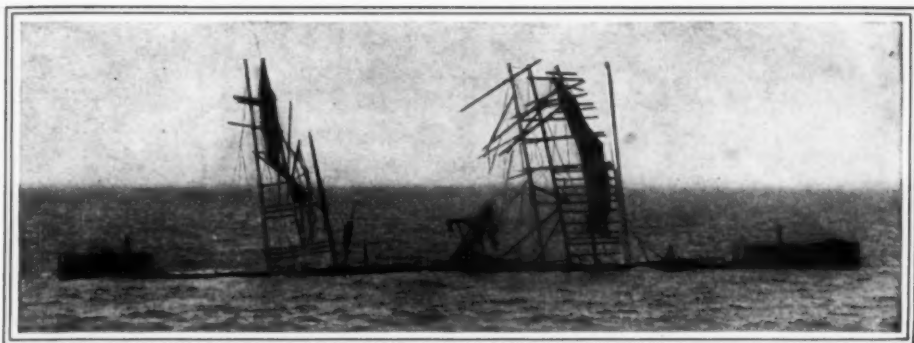
THE FIRST-CLASS ARMORED CRUISER CALIFORNIA, FLAG-SHIP OF THE PACIFIC FLEET, A VESSEL OF NEARLY FOURTEEN THOUSAND TONS DISPLACEMENT, WITH A SPEED OF TWENTY-TWO KNOTS, AND CARRYING FOUR EIGHT-INCH AND FOURTEEN SIX-INCH GUNS

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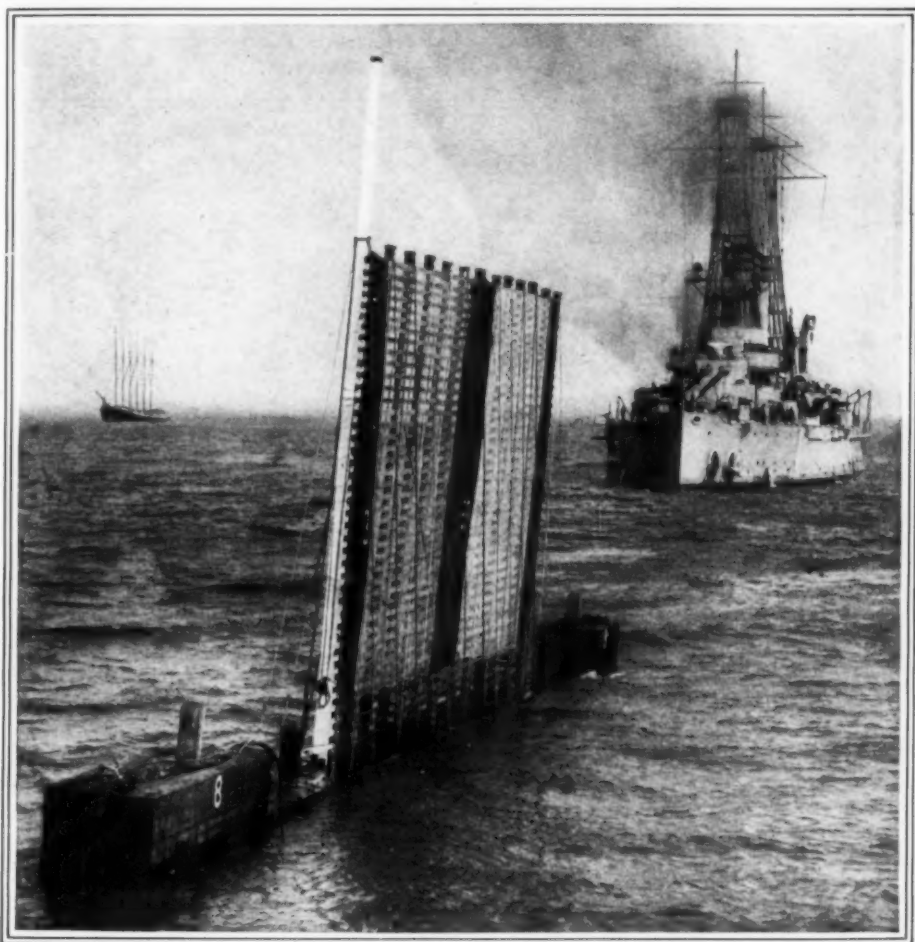
TARGET PRACTISE OF THE AMERICAN BATTLE FLEET—IN THE FOREGROUND IS THE STERN OF THE MICHIGAN, WHICH IS TOWING THE TARGET—CLOSE TO THE TARGET ARE THE SPLASHES OF SHELLS FROM THE GUNS OF THE NORTH DAKOTA, FIRED FROM A DISTANCE OF ABOUT SIX MILES

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THE REMAINS OF THE TARGET AFTER TEN MINUTES' FIRING AT LONG RANGE, SHOWING THE ACCURACY OF THE GUNNERY

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A NEAR VIEW OF THE TARGET ON ITS WAY TO THE FIRING-LINE DURING GUNNERY PRACTISE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES

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A BOAT'S CREW FROM A BATTLE-SHIP ENGAGED IN PLANTING MINES

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LOADING MINES ON THE DECK OF THE BATTLE-SHIP IDAHO AT VERA CRUZ

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what we have got for our money and our effort; whether it is capable of giving the service for which we have provided it. And it is the purpose of this brief article to tell very simply and concisely what the United States navy is.

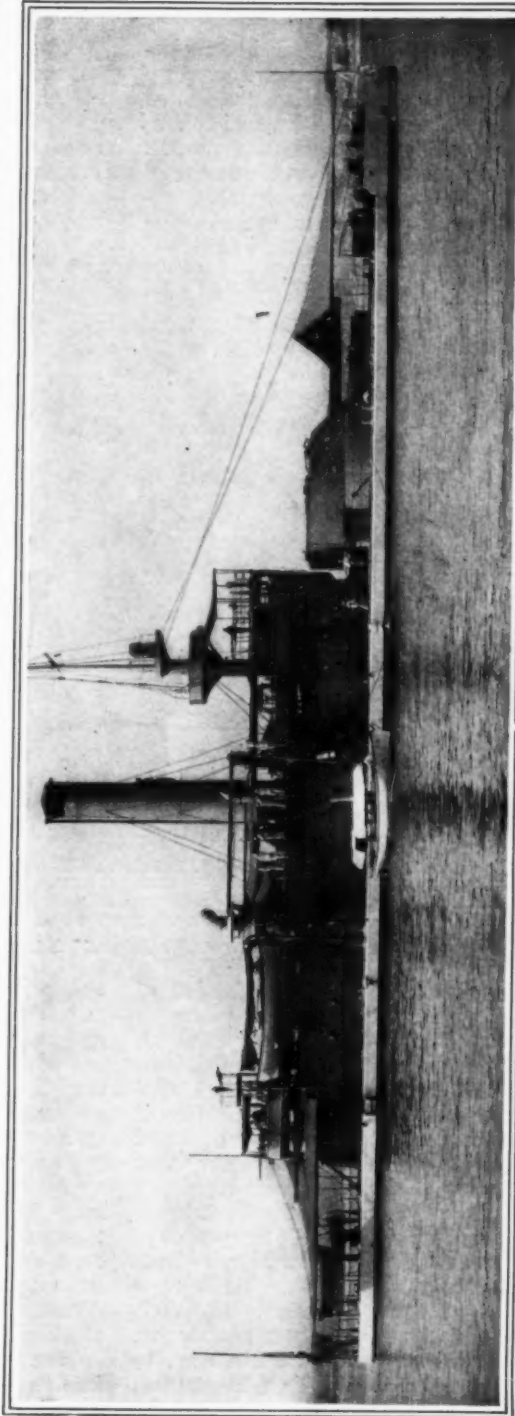
Inasmuch as a navy is powerful and useful only for the purpose of possible conflict with other navies, it can be weighed only by comparison with others. It must be put in the balance against them, estimated and appraised in contrast.

At the outset, one suggestion as to the part the navy has played in our history. A citation from a distinguished European authority, discussing its work in the American Civil War, may be worth while:

In spite of Robert E. Lee's genius, the South of necessity was to succumb for lack of a powerful navy.

The writer quoted, a French naval officer, is one of many authorities on sea power who go so far as to insist that the North won because it had efficient fighting ships, and was able to blockade the South; to prevent the South exporting its cotton, which all the world wanted, and importing munitions of war, which all the world wanted to sell to it. The Federal fleet sealed up and starved to death the Southern Confederacy, which had practically no navy and could not improvise one.

The Federal navy did more than smother the life out of the Confederacy. It also saved the Monroe Doctrine; for it was the powerful fleet of the victorious North, quite as much as its army, that impressed Louis Napoleon with the seriousness of the advice



THE MONITOR CHEYENNE, FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE WYOMING—VESSELS OF THE MONITOR TYPE HAVE PLAYED A FAMOUS PART IN THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN NAVY, BUT THEY ARE NOW REGARDED AS OBSOLETE FOR ANY PURPOSE EXCEPT COAST DEFENSE

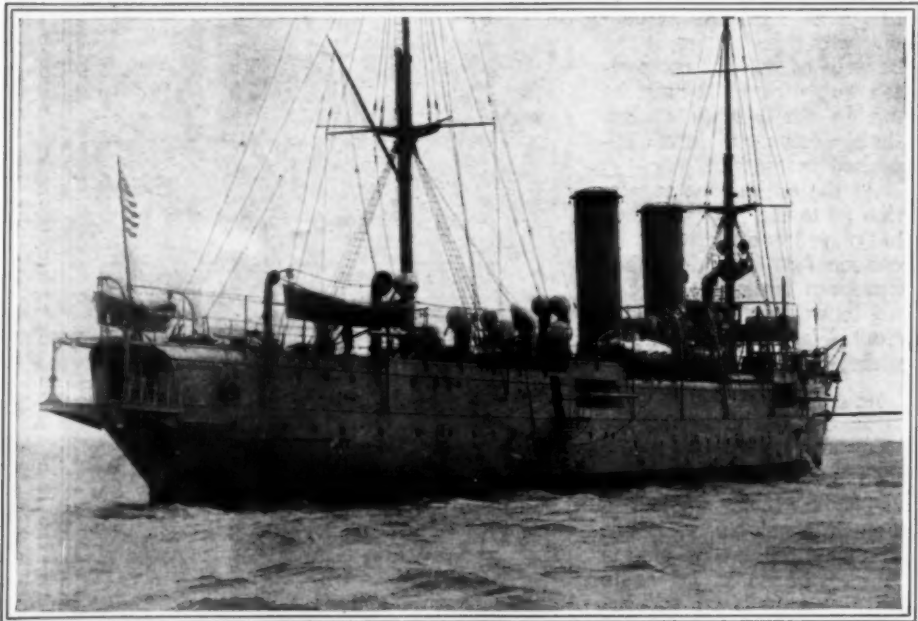
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that he should drop his imperial adventure in Mexico.

The emperor of the French had undertaken the creation of a French suzerainty over Mexico, at the time when the United States was so engrossed with its Civil War that it could not offer effective protest. As soon, however, as the war was out of the way, the Washington government conveyed to the emperor a strong intimation

armed power of the United States was the real establishment of Monroeism.

These two instances in which sea power has served this country have had less recognition than they deserve. The proud place of the navy, won in the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Barbary conflict, the Spanish War, need not be pointed out, because Americans know and pretty well understand it. Despite the fact that the na-



THE CRUISER SAN FRANCISCO, ONE OF THE VESSELS THAT TOOK PART IN THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, NOW SPECIALLY EQUIPPED AS A MINE-LAYER

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that the comfort and peace of mind of everybody concerned would be promoted by a French withdrawal from Mexican activities. The emperor realized that conditions had vastly changed since his inauguration of the enterprise. The United States was now at peace and equipped with a great veteran army and a navy that included some seven hundred vessels—a navy built to blockade the South, but perfectly serviceable for the purposes of a campaign to make good the Monroe Doctrine in Mexico.

There was little hesitation. Napoleon took the hint, and withdrew his support from Maximilian, whom he had tried to set up as ruler in Mexico. Maximilian fell; and his fall before the menace of the

tion has never had a continuing, conscious, and effective naval policy that bespoke a national appreciation of the importance of sea power, it has always had the luck to see its emergency bring forward the men and means necessary to sustain it on the sea.

Every fleet that has given service and won glory for this nation, from the beginnings, has been largely an improvisation of the moment that demanded it. That was even true to a considerable measure of the force that fought and won the Spanish-American War; for the accessories and auxiliaries that served with the fleet in that contest were pressed and commandeered into the service under stress of urgent demand, and on extravagant terms.

No survey of the naval history of the United States can fail to impress the fact that we have been Neptune's children of fortune. We have reaped where we did not sow, won where we did not plan. It is quite too much to hope that we shall always be so favored.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Union had a total of about one hundred vessels in the decaying old navy—vessels mostly of the medieval sailing type, many of them well-nigh useless; all of them together, of course, insignificant in power as compared to a second-rate armored cruiser of to-day. Among the lessons that war taught was the value of steam power on naval ships, and of armor. These two developments completely revolutionized naval armaments, tactics, and strategy.

Yet at the end of the war, after teaching the world a new science of naval warfare, this country dropped out of the race in naval development, permitted its fleet to fall into ruins, and allowed other nations to develop vast sea power by applying the lessons that we had given them.

So it came about that the Civil War navy, strong enough in 1865 to command the respect of any naval power on earth, fell into neglect. Other nations set about building monitors and other metal-bodied and armor-protected vessels of war. They developed the new types of ordnance that had been largely introduced to actual warfare in American experience. They presently resolved many of the uncertainties about the new naval forms, and were well on the way to the construction of really modern fleets, while our own country was still relying on ancient monitors, and even building new vessels of that archaic type.

Our complete lack of a modern navy began to get some attention just about twenty years after the Civil War closed. At that time, it is interesting to recall, there was hardly a vessel on the naval register fit for service in the kind of warfare that a navy would have to face. Old-fashioned armament prevailed, while armor-plate and the forgings for guns of moderately large caliber had to be bought abroad, because America had no plants, either government or private, capable of turning them out.

Steps were taken to encourage domestic development along these lines. Five monitors that had been authorized in 1874 were still unfinished when the naval revival caused orders to be issued, in 1886, for

their completion. Along with this revival of an old program, the first steps were taken toward a really modern battle fleet, by ordering the construction, from plans purchased abroad, of the first battle-ship of the new navy, the *Texas*. Along with her were also ordered the ill-fated *Maine* and the cruiser *Baltimore*.

These were followed by other vessels of the Spanish War era, including the protected cruiser *Olympia*, which carried Dewey's flag at Manila, the *Cincinnati*, the *Detroit*, the *Marblehead*, and notably the armored cruiser *New York*. The *New York* was the first cruiser that made serious pretense of being comparable for speed, power, and protection with the big cruisers that other naval countries were turning out.

Soon after this came a corresponding effort to make our battle-ship types comparable with those of other countries. The *Oregon*, the *Massachusetts*, and the *Indiana* were all ordered and designed with this end in view; and when they were placed in commission they doubtless fulfilled that ideal, though to-day they make a sad enough showing in the company of the great dreadnoughts that represent a later era of naval evolution. The first-class battle-ships of the predreadnought era were of about twelve thousand tons displacement; the dreadnought of to-day must be approximately twice as big, and armed and armored correspondingly.

By fits and spurts, caused by departmental dependence upon legislative caprice, our new navy has been developing down to the present day. We have never had anything like a continuing naval program. No Congress can bind its successors for a long enough future to make it possible to adopt and carry to execution a great scheme of systematic naval development, like the German and English naval programs which have given those countries their splendid modern fleets.

For many years—indeed, ever since the serious business of building a modern navy was set on foot—each Congress has insisted upon resolving itself into a debating society for a few days, to decide our naval policy for the time being. It discusses whether we shall build one, two, three, or more battle-ships; of what general style they are to be; whether any, and what, of the vast array of necessary auxiliaries shall be provided—colliers, torpedo-boats, destroyers, submarines, and all the rest.

With all the patriotism and good intentions in the world, Congress is ill equipped to decide this multiplicity of technical questions. If the two houses of one Congress manage, after long discussion, to reach agreement on an ideal program, there can be absolutely no assurance that the next succeeding legislature, composed in large share of different men, will agree to the same thing. Congress recognized this disability when it created the General Board of the Navy, and set it at work upon framing plans for the development of a fitting force, and for the maintenance of a proper coordination and correlation among all its parts and divisions.

This General Board, whose head is Admiral Dewey, brought in a carefully thought-out scheme and asked for its adoption. Congress contemplated it with mild interest, but that was all that happened. If it had been adopted, and construction carried forward at the rate recommended, the year 1920 would have seen our naval force based on a fighting strength of forty-eight battle-ships, with the proper proportion of auxiliary arms—the various types of cruisers, torpedo-boats, torpedo-boat destroyers, scout ships, colliers, transports, supply ships, submarines, and every other sort of craft that must be provided in order to make the perfected fabric of a naval force.

But the scheme was not adopted, and as a result we have what naval authorities declare is an ill-balanced and unsatisfactory establishment. It is true that we count thirty battle-ships, while statisticians reckon thirty-three for Germany, sixty for Britain, twenty-two for France, and fifteen for Japan. But this statement of battle-ship strength is not by any means a fair presentation of our comparative power on the sea.

Quality, quantity, balance, equipment, a score of other elements, must all be weighed to determine the aggregate efficiency and usefulness of a naval establishment. At the beginning of an inquiry into these varied elements, we ask again:

Where does the United States stand, to-day, among the naval powers?

It is commonly placed in third position; and that is pretty plainly the correct rank.

Great Britain comes first, Germany second. The United States stands third by the test of war-ship tonnage actually built; but if to tonnage already built be added

that which is under construction, we find that at the conclusion of building now actually in progress, France will have taken a slight lead over us, and the United States will have been relegated to fourth place.

And not only this. When we shall have been passed by France and left in fourth place, we shall be in competition with Japan and Russia, both of which have construction programs that will place them close on our heels. In other words, we are in third place to-day; are destined to fourth place very shortly, unless there is a speedy change in our policy; and after that are likely to drop to fifth and possibly sixth place, if Russia and Japan continue their ambitious programs and we do not overmatch them.

These statements are not based on conjectures; they represent our Navy Department's own summarization of the "War-ship Tonnage of the Principal Naval Powers" as it stands to-day. Here are the official figures for the eight leading countries, as they stand now, and as they would stand if vessels now building were completed:

	TONNAGE COMPLETED	TONNAGE COMPLETED AND BUILDING
Great Britain.....	2,157,850	2,714,106
Germany	951,713	1,306,577
United States.....	765,133	894,889
France	688,840	890,915
Japan	519,640	699,916
Italy	285,460	497,815
Russia	270,861	678,818
Austria-Hungary ..	221,526	347,508

These figures cover aggregate tonnage of the following types of vessels:

Battle-ships, dreadnought type—that is, having a main battery of big guns eleven inches or more in caliber.

Battle-ships, predreadnought type—that is, vessels of a displacement from about ten thousand tons upward, whose main batteries are of more than one caliber.

Coast-defense vessels—that is, smaller battle-ships and monitors.

Battle cruisers—that is, armored cruisers having guns of largest caliber in their main battery, and capable of taking their place in line of battle with the battle-ships. They have an increase of speed at the expense of carrying fewer heavy guns and lighter armor protection.

Armored cruisers.

Cruisers—that is, all unarmored ships of more than fifteen hundred tons. Scout ships are considered as cruisers in which battery and protection have been sacrificed to secure extreme speed. The word “protected” has been omitted, because all cruisers except the smallest and oldest now have protective decks.

Torpedo-boat destroyers.

Torpedo-boats.

Submarines.

Naval authorities look to the dreadnought strength of a navy as the first test by which to determine its comparative efficiency. By this test the British navy takes first place, with twenty vessels of this class completed and sixteen building; the German, second place, with thirteen built and seven building; the American, third place, with eight built and four building; the French, fourth place, with four built and eight building; the Japanese, fifth place, with two built and four building; the Italian, sixth place, with three built and seven building; the Austrian, seventh place, with three built and four building; and the Russian, eighth place, with none finished, but seven building.

Thus it is found that the United States, though it now ranks third, is building only the same number of vessels of the first class as the powers that rank far below her. We are building four, while Britain has sixteen in progress; four, while France has eight under construction; four, while Germany, Russia, and Italy each have seven building; four, which is the same number that Japan and Austria have on the stocks.

It is not difficult to calculate our finish in the race for naval respectability—say nothing of supremacy—at this rate.

But the analysis of the next class of fighting ships shows still more impressively how the United States is falling behind. It is the predreadnought type. Of these Great Britain has forty, and the United States comes second with twenty-two. This, instead of being a testimony to our power, is, in fact, a proof that our navy is not keeping pace. We have almost three times as many predreadnoughts as dreadnoughts. Great Britain has only twice as many. Germany has thirteen dreadnoughts as compared to twenty predreadnoughts, and by that sign proves that her navy is better balanced than any other of the foremost ones. France, indeed, is even worse

provided in this regard than the United States, for it has eighteen predreadnoughts and only four dreadnoughts.

Predreadnoughts were very good ships in their time, but that time is past. The noble old wooden frigates of the first half of the nineteenth century were excellent in their day and way; but they would now be quite useless in naval war. The predreadnought battle-ship compares with the dreadnought about as Decatur's frigates would have compared with the monitors of the Civil War epoch.

A navy list that is overloaded with predreadnoughts is out of date. *Not a single nation among the eight naval powers has a battle-ship of the predreadnought type under construction to-day.* Could there be more conclusive testimony?

Those same eight nations have a total of fifty-seven dreadnoughts in process of construction. It is needless to go farther. Plainly, all the nations with which there is the possibility of a combat are determined to make the dreadnought their leading naval weapon.

The difference between battle-ships of the two eras is suggested when it is observed that the average tonnage of our twenty-two old-style battle-ships is a trifle more than fourteen thousand, while the up-to-date dreadnought class includes such monsters as—

DISPLACEMENT

New York.....	27,000
Oklahoma	27,500
Texas	27,000
Wyoming	26,000
Pennsylvania	31,400
Twin to Pennsylvania.....	31,400

Keeping in mind the fact that the whole naval world has utterly abandoned the smaller type of battle-ship; that not a single one is now under construction in any first or second class navy; that they are on the way to the scrap-heap just as fast as better vessels can be built to take their places—it must be pretty plain that our comparative wealth in this type of battle-ship is our poverty in real naval strength.

Just a few years ago these very battle-ships which are now outclassed made our navy the second in the world. So recently as 1905 the maritime authorities all conceded that position to the United States, and we plumed ourselves on it.

But 1905 saw the construction of the first dreadnought. Built in England, its

construction marked two revolutionary achievements. First, it was vastly larger than any fighting craft theretofore constructed; and second, it was built in record-making time. The British Admiralty wanted to find out how quickly, in case of need, it could turn out a first-class fighting ship ready for business; and the naval world was almost as much astonished, when the veil of mystery was lifted, to learn the speed with which the new vessel had been built, as to learn what manner of monster it was.

Instantly the world saw that every other battle-ship had suddenly been relegated to the second class. The first class was composed of the new British monster; and to get into that class, the other naval countries must build vessels of the same size, speed, and type.

Some of them did; Germany, especially. Because it appreciated and instantly adopted the new fashion, Germany leaped into second rank. It went into the construction of dreadnoughts, while the United States hung back. The result is that Germany now has almost twice as many of these first-line vessels as the United States, and we are utterly crowded out of leadership.

Further evidence of the comparative decline of the American navy is found when the classification of battle cruisers is examined. These are dreadnoughts in size, but are built with a special view to speed. In order to carry more powerful engines, they have lighter armor and a smaller number of great guns. Of these the Germans have four, averaging a displacement of more than twenty-two thousands tons; the British have nine, averaging a little less than twenty-one thousand tons.

The United States has *not a single vessel of this class*, either built or building. They are a very powerful and useful type; and we have none of them. But on the other hand, of "coast-defense vessels"—that is, small battle-ships and monitors, a type just about obsolete in this day of big and swift fighting craft—we have a *greater number than is listed in any other navy*, except only that of Austria.

Not only are we without a single vessel of the battle-cruiser type, but we are not building any. Germany, with four of them in commission, has four more building. Japan has two in commission and two building; Russia has four building; Britain has nine built and one building.

The fetching and carrying of naval service is done by the smaller cruisers. In ordinary service a light cruiser can do most of the things a battle-ship can do. Of course it cannot go on the battle-line when the supreme clash comes, and give and take the hard knocks for which the battle-ship is built; but for the business of patrol, of keeping our flag afloat where it is desirable to have it seen, of doing the innumerable services for which war-ships are needed, swift cruisers are ideal. Not only can they relieve the great fighting craft of these minor duties, but they can perform them at far less expense.

Moreover—and this is a point of the greatest importance—if the battle-ships are to be kept scattered around the world on all manner of detached duty, they cannot get the opportunity for maneuvers in fleet formation. These fleet maneuvers are of supreme importance if the ships are to be ready for fleet service when war comes. When they go to war they must fight in such formation. If commanders are not experienced in handling them in this order in time of peace, they will not be prepared for such operations in war. And how shall the battle-ships be kept together, in squadron and fleet formation, if they are constantly to be detached hither and yon on all manner of mere errands that ought to be done by lighter craft?

How lamentably weak our navy is in this regard is suggested by another comparison with our possible rivals. The British navy is credited with seventy-four cruisers built and seventeen building; the German with forty-one built and five building; the American with only fourteen built and *none building*.

Under this classification of cruisers come the scouts. These are of the greatest importance in naval war. They must be, first of all, very fast, and capable of carrying a large fuel supply. Therefore both armor and armament must be sacrificed.

Their business is to form the advance skirmish-line for the fleet. In the most approved naval practise of the present day, they are spread out in a wide semicircular formation in advance of the battle fleet, watching the enemy's movements, feeling out his position, reporting everything learned, and always prepared to prevent a surprise attack.

Manifestly, the greater their number, the more effectively can they do their

work, the better will the bulldogs of the fighting line be guarded against surprise, the more chance will there be for the commander to know more about his enemy than the enemy knows about him.

Great Britain has thirty-one scout ships, the best of them making as high as twenty-nine knots an hour; under twenty-five knots they are not esteemed really good scouts. Germany has fourteen of them, also very swift; while the United States has a paltry three, and these of only twenty-four knots speed — so slow that they would be of rather dubious serviceability in either of the other countries.

We are, in short, practically without equipment in this important branch, and we have not a single such vessel building. On the other hand, Germany is building them under a program intended to provide her with thirty by 1920. Curiously enough, that is the same number which was recommended as a proper and necessary total for our navy by the report of the General Board, and the General Board projected its plan with the idea of reaching that total in 1920.

Congress pigeonholed the recommendation of our General Board; Germany adopted it. That's about the substance of the situation.

In one direction the American navy is apparently very well developed. It has an excellent fleet of torpedo-boats and torpedo-boat destroyers. But even in this direction, while quality has been kept well in mind in the development of our flotilla, in numbers it is quite unsatisfactory as compared with the corresponding equipment of other powers.

It should always be kept in mind that these things must be comparative. The best destroyer flotilla, from the standpoint of quality, would be quite inadequate if the enemy had one so much more powerful as to overmatch it when the time came for action.

Of torpedo-boats and destroyers, according to the official statistics, the British navy numbers two hundred and sixteen; the German, one hundred and thirty; the American, sixty-four. The British have twenty-one vessels of this class building, the Germans twenty-four, and the United States only eleven.

The inadequacy of our navy in this department is emphasized when it is explained that our shortage in scout ships

would have to be made up, in actual war, by requiring scout service of the torpedo-boats and destroyers. These are not built for scout service, ought not to be required to perform it, and manifestly, when performing it, cannot be doing the work for which they are intended.

How important is torpedo fighting in the naval warfare of to-day has been shown in the contests of the present world-war. It is therefore interesting to know that we have not enough torpedoes to fire a second round from all our vessels of this class. In fact, we could hardly start on the second round. There are one hundred and seventy-three torpedo tubes in our present flotilla, and as ammunition for them we have on hand about two hundred torpedoes.

This would not be so important a deficiency, if it were not for the fact that it requires about a year to manufacture a torpedo. It costs about five thousand dollars, but that is a minor consideration. No amount of money would equip our flotilla with torpedoes if they were needed for actual service to-morrow. It would require months; and meanwhile the critical engagement might have been fought.

In the matter of mines, we are just as ill supplied. These, likewise, require time for their manufacture. Their vital importance has been newly demonstrated in the present war, as previously it was shown in the Russo-Japanese War.

The Germans and British — especially the former — have devoted themselves to the perfection of this branch of equipment. The American navy is sadly out of date in this regard, simply because it has not been provided with the necessary material.

We come now to the very last word in naval equipment, the submarines. They were regarded as entirely experimental when the Russo-Japanese War opened, and their use in that contest did not by any means convince the naval authorities. But from the beginning of the war now in progress they have commanded the respect and fear of all the masters of naval operations.

Some months before the beginning of this war an eminent British naval authority startled the naval community by venturing the guess that mines, torpedoes, and submarines would prove to have revolutionized war on the sea, and seriously limited the usefulness of the battle-ship.

His suggestion initiated a sharp debate; but the war's test has indicated that the prediction was not overdrawn.

The French were the pioneers in the development of the submarine arm. They are credited with fewer of this type of craft than the British possess, but with more than either Germany or the United States can count. Moreover, they are building them faster than Germany or America, and have the same number under construction that are credited to Britain. The most recent naval statistics on submarine strength are:

	IN SERVICE	BUILDING
Great Britain.....	75	22
France	64	22
United States.....	30	10
Germany	27	18
Russia	30	10
Italy	10	8
Japan	13	2
Austria	6	6

Congress is entitled to credit for a recent important advance in our submarine program. Just as Great Britain, by inventing the dreadnought, relegated all existing battle-ships to the second line, so our own Navy Department, with the backing of Congress, has adopted a project for building a group of submarines bigger, faster, and more powerful than any now owned by any navy.

These will be, in fact, about twice as big, in point of displacement, as the largest now afloat, registering about twelve hundred tons. Each will have its own wireless outfit and rapid-fire guns, with a cruising radius of at least three thousand miles, and a speed of twenty to twenty-one knots at the surface. Such information as the department has permitted to reach the public concerning the specifications for these craft, suggests that Jules Verne's Nautilus is by way of being outdone in almost every respect.

It is understood, however, that even in this new departure we are not to be permitted to maintain a lead over naval rivals.

Great Britain and Germany, also with much secrecy, are building or planning giant submarines that are expected to hold, for each country, the supremacy in this field.

To summarize, then—the American navy is strong in obsolescent battle-ships, too small and too slow to perform up-to-date service.

It is a bad third in all-big-gun battle-ships of the dreadnought type.

It has not even started building battle cruisers.

It is a bad third in cruisers.

It is fourth in torpedo-boats and destroyers.

It is barely holding third place in submarines.

It is utterly outclassed in scout ships.

Finally, our navy is deficient in its supply of properly trained officers and men. Our regulations for the advancement of officers make it impossible for men to reach the ranks of higher responsibility till they have become too old.

The German navy has nine enlisted men to one officer; the Japanese navy, eight enlisted men to one officer; the United States navy, seventeen enlisted men to one officer. This points to a deficiency in the reserve strength of officers. In case of serious losses in war, the problem of providing officers would be a very grave one.

Out of all these and many other, if minor, aspects of our naval situation, the authorities draw the conclusion that our maritime establishment needs overhauling. Pessimism need not jump to the conclusion that the navy has gone to the dogs. It has not. There is every reason for confidence that a very high quality is maintained, in both material and personnel, aside from the difficulties that have been suggested. But these are serious weaknesses.

And surely the present is a time in which they deserve the earnest consideration of all patriotic Americans, in public or private life.

THE TRAGEDY OF WAR

THE shot, the shell, the shriek, the blood-stained soil,
The ship, soul-freighted, seeking shroud sublime—
Behold, where nations weave with tragic toil
The cabalistic tapestry of time!

Clarence Urmey

WHEREAS IT HAS PLEASED—

BY JOHN FLEMING WILSON

AUTHOR OF "WHY TIM MULCAHEY CAME HOME," ETC.



N the dingy reading-room of the What Cheer House in San Francisco I picked up a copy of the *Pacific Mission Herald*, of date of six months before, and read:

Whereas it has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst the Rev. R. Thomias, of the Salem Mission Union, we—

I put down the paper and looked across at Dr. Reynolds, just in from a three years' stay in the South Seas.

"So Thomias is dead?" I inquired.

"He is," he answered.

"Maybe it's only another—"

"No," he said firmly. "It's no myth this time. The man of mystery and seeker of strange souls is gone. He is really dead. I was with him on Diana Island when he finally died. His one eye was still fixed on the supreme goal. He—he saved his own soul, at the last."

"Explain," I demanded. "From all that I knew of him he was a faithful missionary and as pure a creature as this soiled world affords."

Reynolds winced at my demand, holding up one hand.

"You misunderstood him. I know he did a vast deal of good, and brought in his sheaves; but of all the souls that he took to his God the strangest was his own. We all knew of him by hearsay. He was really a phantom to us. We heard of him from sullen native or vociferous trader. He was rumor, gossip, a legend; we saw his works, but never the man. Each one of us had a different conception of him. The single thing we were sure of was that he had but one eye, and was the solitary representative in the archipelagoes of the Salem Mission Union. But I determined to seek him out, and finally I ran him down. It took me seven weeks to do it.

I was with him when he proved his actuality by dying."

"He converted Emil Kunst," I interposed. "That stiff-necked millionaire would yield to no one but a personality of individual power."

"And Emil died, too," Reynolds said slowly. "He died in the full odor of sanctity. And at the very last Thomias saved his own soul—for which, with work and prayer, he had been striving through a score of weary years. Did you ever see a man snatch his own soul from the jaws of hell? I have. Listen, and I will tell you the story.

"You recall that a year ago an epidemic of the influenza spread throughout a thousand islands. Death plucked lives over two thousand leagues of sea as you would pick berries from a laden bush. There came no help; the world was oblivious. There were practically no doctors and no medicines. To those of us down there it seemed as if those delightful isles smoked with the vapor of ascending souls. When you go back, you will miss many friendly faces. You will also find, not monuments to the dead, but the memorials of what the dying suffered. You will stumble against low blocks of white coral across which the afflicted flung themselves to cough. I have seen a slave crawl feebly from his block to let his friend have its rough support under his heaving ribs. Men died in the prostrate attitude of supplication.

"As a government official, I worked as best I could. I saved the worthless lives of beach-combers and the trash that washes up on the shores of the big trading islands. And all the while I knew, from gossip, that there was a man doing the real work, laboring among the real people; Thomias was on the job in his enormous parish.

"McFarland of Tua came driving through the pass in his three-masted schooner—you know the black favor of the man—and bellowed for medicinal stores before his foot was on the beach. It appeared that Thomias was down on Tua, burning shells on the shore to make lime, wherewith to mix lime-water for the slaking of feverish thirsts.

"He's doing what he can," McFarland roared at me. "He doesn't sleep. We must have medicine. A hundred are dead. Medicine!"

"I offered a portion of my scanty supply. McFarland glared at the package and snarled:

"Thomias is bending over a fire of coconut-husks this minute, piling the shells on it, and one ear cocked for the cough of the next sick man. Medicine!"

"Then old Nassau John came canoe-wise, six paddlers sweating, to tell me that over on Richardson Bank Thomias was burying the dead.

"If they're dead, what are you bothering me for?" I demanded.

"Nassau John broke down and put his wrinkled old face on the back of his hairy hand.

"I have a girl—my little girl," he sobbed. "She coughs without ceasing, and the tears run down her cheeks. Is there no medicine?"

"Two months later, Matheson, skipper of the Laughing Lass, blew in to tell me that he wanted a Bible.

"Thomias is down at my place," he informed me. "We're burying 'em as fast as we can. His Bible was stolen by a crazy man, who chewed the leaves for medicine. Gimme a Bible! Them dead are waiting."

"So it went. I tell you it made me sore to have to pat and pet a lot of whites, half-whites, and worthless beach-combers when there were real folks needing me. I went to the governor at last, and told him I was done.

"I'm a government doctor," I admitted; "but it's time we took hold of this epidemic and helped out the islanders. I want a schooner, stores, and a couple of assistants. I'm going down to see if I can't do something."

"He's a good sort, that governor. He hummed officially and hawed gubernatorially; then he gave me my schooner and what I wanted.

"We'll charge it up to somebody or other," he said. "Sign a requisition for supplies."

II

"So I went my way," the doctor continued, "through many islands and had many experiences, until I commenced to get fresher gossip about Thomias. It seemed he was writing letters and sending boys off in canoes to hand 'em to passing skippers. One dark night, off the Desdemona group, one of 'em was passed up by a small fellow who spoke no language I could understand. I thought it was for me, and took it down into the cabin. It was addressed:

"MISS MIZPAH SHELDON,

"SALEM, PA., U. S. A.

"I tucked it away and proceeded about my business, which at that moment was to see if I couldn't save an old chief, Aitutaki Jack, who was our right-hand man in his group. I managed to pull the old boy through, and then I set sail for Kunst's Island. On the way I raised a little atoll I'd never seen before, and put in to leeward of it to see whether it was inhabited. It was. I went ashore, and the first man I struck was a thin, rustily-clad, middle-aged man with one eye—the Rev. R. Thomias.

"I introduced myself, and he coughed terribly. When he was done, he wiped his eyes and told he was glad I was come.

"My dear friend, Emil Kunst, is very sick," he said huskily. "You will take me to him?"

"I'm bound that way," I replied. "When can you go?"

"In an hour," he responded. "First I must bury one of my people."

"It was just dusk when he closed his Bible over the shallow grave and smiled at the little group that huddled, shivering, about it. An hour afterward I had my course laid for Kunst's Island. It was to leeward. We raised it the next morning. I shall never forget that night, however.

"You see, Thomias was a curiosity to me. I had heard of him for years, but I had never seen him. I studied him. I suppose I was horribly rude and tactless, for I embarrassed him, and he shut up like a clam. Then I recognized that he was stricken with the influenza, and tried to prescribe for him.

" 'Save the medicine,' he told me. 'We shall need it. I am very healthy. I have only a touch of the fever. It is nothing.' "

"I couldn't even get him to take a sleeping-powder, though he was pure nerves and needed rest.

"When we went ashore, we could see by the behavior of the people that Kunst must be pretty ill. His big house was empty, except for an old crone who continually dipped a dirty towel into a calabash of water and wrung it out, as if this repeated operation had some magic charm. So far as I know, she thought she was nursing her master. When she saw Thomias, she laid the towel at his feet and stood at attention. The missionary stared down at the filthy rag and then turned to me.

" 'It is to show that he is still alive,' he explained. 'A superstition! So long as the cloth breathes the water in and out, the breath goes in and out of the man's lungs. When he dies, the rag will dry.' "

"He lifted a finger, and the crone resumed her task of dipping and wringing that dirty towel—artificial respiration, I suppose one might call it.

"Thomias led the way through a long hall, with closed doors on each side, to a broad stairway, through another hall, and into a big room with latticed windows. In the middle of the room was a bed, on which lay a man, almost indistinguishable to us, who had come from the glare of the morning sunshine.

" 'Kunst!' Thomias whispered.

"The man on the bed turned a great shadowy head and stared at us. Then he croaked:

" 'Thomias!'

"Simple, wasn't it? But you should have heard those voices. It was precisely as if two men met, avoiding each other's eyes, but compelled by unwilling affection to salute in passing. The missionary didn't advance, so I took it on myself to step forward.

" 'I'm the doctor,' I said.

"I reached for his wrist.

" 'You can do nothing,' said the man on the bed. 'The cough has stopped.'

"I—you—all of us have heard of Emil Kunst. You know the tales that floated across the seas. I stared down at him. I held his wrist, unconscious of the dying pulse.

"Thomias brought me to earth with a hoarse question.

" 'How do you find him?'

"Before I answered that query I peered down into the man's eyes. They met mine with a strange, persistent steadiness. The pupils were dilated. I seemed to see a flicker behind the lenses—a small candle flame blowing in the wind of death.

" 'He is dying,' I said.

"Thomias came to the bedside and knelt, with a triumphant and serene expression on his face."

III

DR. REYNOLDS stared round the dingy room, at the torn papers that hung like soiled rags from dull wooden spindles, at the window painted with some opaque pigment, at the twin spots of soot on the ceiling over the hissing gas-jets.

"This is the What Cheer House in San Francisco," he murmured; "and I have seen Thomias kneeling by the bedside of a dead man five thousand miles away beyond the sea.

"He got up presently, and left the room without a word. I closed the dead man's eyes and laid the limp hand across the ribbed chest. I followed the missionary down through the long hall with the closed doors on each side, and to the porch. There I saw the old crone squatting with bowed head, a dirty towel clutched in her hand. She did not move. She no longer dipped the rag and wrung it out. Her master was dead.

"I found Thomias on the little beach, coughing painfully.

" 'He was my friend,' he said in a hoarse voice, when the paroxysm was over.

" 'And now?' I suggested.

" 'No one understood him,' Thomias pursued. 'I knew him well. He was a strange soul.' He turned on me with unspeakable pride. 'I saved it. He is in heaven, with our Lord!'

"You recall Kunst's history. Not nice, was it? Possibly most of it was gossip; and the missionary said he was in heaven.

"The next matter that occurred to my mind was the immediate need of medicine for Thomias. Out in the glare of the tropic day I saw how feeble he was, how shaken with the internal pain he must have been suffering. I spoke curtly to him, telling him that he must put himself under my charge instantly and obey directions.

" 'I am not prepared for death,' he informed me quietly.

" 'I don't know much about you,' I replied; 'but from what I hear you have been laboring as a missionary down here in the South Seas for many years. I don't understand why—'

"He pursed his lips.

" 'It would be hard to say,' he said presently. 'But I have a—a task. I have saved others. I am afraid I cannot save myself.'

" 'A little rest and the proper treatment will do wonders,' I interposed.

"He brushed that aside.

" 'I am not unwilling to die,' he said gently. 'I am speaking of a moral task.' His voice suddenly rose three tones. 'What is my body to me? It is my soul I'm trying to save!'

" 'I am sure I should have said something commonplace, but at that moment the disease seized him in its grip, and he was helpless as a child. Hardened as I was, I almost cried over him. Then he ceased to struggle. My finger on his pulse told me that I was too late. I picked him up and carried him to the great house, past the old hag with her damp towel in her claw, past the closed doors in the long hall, and to the foot of the stairs. My strength failed me at that point. I kicked open the last door and pushed my burden through.

" 'I laid him on a low, silken couch, draped with thin and perfumed tissue, under a woman's gown that hung softly from a hook on the wall. The sole furnishings of the apartment—I looked around quickly—were this wonderful couch and that gown. Probably I do not convey the prodigious meaning of it all to you—for that room was *inhabited*. Not by a person, but by—by a thought; the thought of woman, of love, of beauty!

" 'That was where I laid the dying missionary. From the couch he gazed at me as from a great distance.

" 'I am dying,' he whispered.

" 'That is true,' I said miserably. 'Your heart—'

"He smiled.

" 'My heart,' he repeated gently. 'Yes!'

" 'You had better tell me what you want done,' I suggested. 'I'll write out anything you want. You may last an hour, or more, possibly; but any moment—'

"He looked at me with an extraordinary intensity.

" 'At any moment!' he said slowly. 'I have lived from moment to moment. It is ended. If I can live the last moment well and righteously, I will—' He stopped and looked at the gown that hung above him. Then he reached up his thin hand to the hem of it, carried it to his lips, and kissed it. 'My last sin,' he said.

" 'I won't tell you all he told me in that final period; but that you may know Thomias, I must speak of some of the things he said.

" 'You know that he came from Salem, Pennsylvania, and was the representative of the Missionary Union of that place. He spoke of a woman. Her name was Mizpah Sheldon. I have never been in Salem, but it appeared that there is an old stone house at the corner of an old country road, one of those houses built of field stone that last interminably and display to us the rugged aspect that met the eyes of our dead forefathers. It was at this corner that young Thomias used to meet Mizpah Sheldon when he was eighteen and she sixteen. They talked of everything but what was in their young hearts. She was dark and shapely; he was ardent and slender.

" 'Listen to Thomias, speaking from that silken couch and staring at that lovely and abandoned gown—yet not abandoned, for there was the perfume of woman about it.

" 'She was a beautiful woman,' he told me. 'I loved her. It is a crime to bind a young man with vows. I was sworn to go as a missionary. My mother had dreamed of it, and the minister had talked to me. They sang a song one night at church that brought the tears to my eyes. I vowed never to marry, and to go as a missionary. It was a solemn promise.

" 'But we still met by the corner, under the shadow of the big stone house, with the hills lying moonlit about us. And we spoke about common things. She had hands that played gently about her, within the circle of her loveliness. And I loved her. When her fingers touched mine, I—I prayed. Instead of telling her I loved her, I prayed to God to help me keep my vow.

" 'But one night, as we stood in the shadow, something seemed to come out of the sky, and I found her in my arms.'

"The man stopped there, and fingered the gown that hung gently down from the hook on the wall.

" 'You see, she loved me,' he said simply. 'I remembered my vow—breast to

breast we both remembered my sworn oath never to marry and to go as a missionary. Her hands pleaded about my neck. There was one moment—but we remembered the vow. We knew that God had called me. We talked it over by daylight, she and I. She brushed her hair back with one hand, and smiled at me, the smile of the woman who loves you but understands.

"Then, one night, we met in the shadow, and she came right into my arms. We kissed each other, and then she whispered in my ear. Remember that she was—that we—loved each other. There was a way out of violating my vow to the minister and to my mother. We need not marry. She loved me. We were young.

"I saved her."

"He brought this out with a sigh," said Reynolds. "Then he was silent a long time. I kept my finger on his pulse. It flickered like light on a rippled lake. There was nothing I could say. But presently he continued:

"I saved her. And we grew to know each other as people do who dare not touch hands. In the end I went as a missionary. She is the Salem Missionary Union. I take her money, and I have tried—I have attempted to do the work. But I have always remembered. She offered me—the supreme sacrifice."

"Again the dying man fingered the soft tissue of the gown and sighed. When he spoke it was very weakly.

"So you see the two of us have done what I vowed to do. But I have lost my own soul. I still remember that hour; I—I regret keeping my vow. I still feel her

against my breast. Her hands still play about my face. There is a moment when—"

"The man was dying. I bent over him. His lips were parted in a smile. Suddenly he waked again—the disease plays strange tricks with one's last moments—and said clearly:

"I want you to understand that she was a saint. Saintry women sometimes make—the great sacrifice. But I was wicked. I have struggled all these years to overcome my feelings—to stop remembering that moment; but I never have forgotten. I have labored outwardly faithful. I have saved souls; but my own soul is lost. I cannot stop regretting—her little hands played about my face—she would have given me all she had to give—and now—"

"The man raised himself up on the silken couch.

"And now," he repeated, "I am dying."

"He stared round, like a man newly awakened in a strange place. His eye caught the gown floating down from the wall. He put out his hand and touched it. Then he carried its hem to his parched lips and kissed it.

"Mizpah!" he murmured; and so he died."

Dr. Reynolds picked up the tattered paper and stared at the item, reading it slowly aloud:

"Whereas it has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst the Rev. R. Thomias—

"It was God," he muttered. "Thomias saved his own soul, and God took him."

"And Mizpah Sheldon?" I said.

We bowed our heads.

SEPARATION

I STAND alone before a yawning vast
Of separation; and the deep abyss,
Upon whose brink I wait, has naught for this,
My yearning soul, but heartache—present, past.
My arms outstretch as if they might at last
Enfold a kindred spirit which they miss—
While yawning darkness claims my hungry kiss,
And life goes on by solitude o'ercast.
And this is fate, or call it what you will—
This constant, never-ending, vain desire
To reach out through the dismal space until
Our bodies languish and our spirits tire.
Then night comes on; the hour is drawing late;
Another day I wait, I wait, I wait!

Florence E. Buek

AFTER THE FIFTY-EIGHTH LAP

BY WILBUR HALL



HERE was a time when automobile editors fell for press-agent stories about race drivers who were retiring permanently from the game, or who were announcing their farewell appearances; but that time has passed. Barney Oldfield really spoiled the play, by quitting racing oftener than Patti made farewell tours. Now we look at such a yarn skeptically, and, if we publish it at all, head it "perhaps," or "important if true."

So when the telegraph editor sent in a flimsy from Detroit saying that Bill Shurz was through with automobile racing and was going into the accessories business for himself, I sniffed and went to "Gasoline Row" to look for the inside of the story.

Shurz had been out on the coast in the Persis race team, and if anybody had the story it would probably be Monte Merrick, who had teamed with him. I found Monte trying to persuade a nice little old lady that a "six" was easier and safer for her daughter to drive than a "four" or an electric. As nearly as I could tell, he was succeeding—which will show you what kind of a little persuader Merrick was, especially with the women.

When he had made a date for a demonstration, and sent the nice little old lady home in one of the garage cars, we went back into the shop. Monte took a cigar and said:

"What's on your mind?"

He took the query from Detroit and read it slowly.

"Bill Shurz, race driver, announces retirement from game to enter business for himself. Says auto racing getting too fast for safety. Rumors of woman in the case. How much?" He grinned. "Well?"

"What's the bed-rock truth of the yarn, Monte? I thought you'd have it."

"I have. Want it?"

"You know it," I said. "Shoot!"

The little driver sat down on the running-board of a big car and stretched his legs out.

"It's most likely straight," he began. "Bill has got it pretty near right; the racing game is too fast—for him. Also the rumor about a lady—yes, I'd estimate that was the goods, too. But mainly the trouble with Bill is that he's a bad loser. My guess is that he made up his mind to retire in about the fifty-eighth lap of the Santa Monica road-race last fall, when he and Webster and I drove Persis cars. Give me a light and I'll tell you about it."

II

"LOUIE ANTHONY brought the Persis out here a year ago—remember?—and I signed up to drive races for him. I'm not very strong for the Persis stock models, but I will say that I had a humdinger of an engine in that boat I drew. The car went into second money for me in last year's Phoenix, as you know, and won the Imperial Valley race, and showed at Corona, besides grabbing off a few hill-climbs and special purses in race-meets. She had a good engine and she liked to work. Of course, this spring, Anthony wanted me to go after the big sack at Santa Monica, and he didn't have to argue with me about that. So it was all fixed.

"But about that time he got a wire from the Persis factory saying that they were going to send Bill Shurz and that fellow Webster out here with their cars to enter, and they wanted Louie to press-agent the thing so as to get all the advertising they could out of it. Shurz ran a bluff about demanding appearance money to come West, and Anthony went after the committee and tried to talk them into it. But Teddy Tetzlaff, and Olin Davis, and Earl Cooper, and the Nikrent boys, and a lot of other top-notchers were already entered,

and the committee couldn't see a bonus for Bill Shurz.

"If he wants to come out,' they told Anthony, 'he'd better pack his suit-case and buy a berth, because we wouldn't pay appearance money to William Howard Taft.'

"Of course Shurz and Webster came anyhow, but the play got them some extra publicity. Their cars had been overhauled at the factory, and Shurz, who ran the team, had a sneaking idea that he and Webster were going back to Detroit with most of Southern California in their treasure-boxes. First time I met him, I saw that Shurz was one of these drivers who've got heads so big they can't get their hats off to speak to men like Oldfield and Chevrolet, and that he thought us Western drivers were all retired street-car motormen who'd get dizzy if we made more than eighteen miles an hour. I tried to be decent to him and Webster, and told them I'd give 'em any tips I could about the course; but Shurz just laughed.

"Run along, son,' he said, 'and pump up your tires. We'll breeze around this course of yours the next day or so, and then we'll tell you where to head in at.'

"Well, I didn't have anything to say to that. I'd seen men like Shurz before. Also I'd been somewhere in the money at Santa Monica three times with real drivers taking my smoke, and I wasn't going to bother fussing with two fellows I'd have to team with. But I had to laugh a week afterward, when Shurz went into the curb at the Soldiers' Home turn, trying to pass a boy named Danvers in a stripped Ford. Shurz said it was a cracked steering-knuckle, but I only told him he'd better get his life insured before the big race. That made him fume some.

"Anthony had entered all three Persis cars under the factory's name, and that meant Webster and Shurz and I would play the game together; but when he mentioned the usual rule about prize-money for teams, Shurz yelled his head off. You probably know that when drivers team together they split the purses, no matter who wins. I don't think that's a good thing for racing, because it leads to hard feelings and sometimes to rough stuff on the course; but that's none of my funeral. It's the custom—let it go at that.

"Shurz said right away that he and Webster would split with nobody. They

were out from Detroit to win, and if I couldn't get into the money I'd better go back to picking oranges. That was what Shurz said, and when Anthony told me, I said:

"Oh, very well. I have to worry about Shurz! I'd like to bet him three hundred on the side that I'll beat him a full lap at that.'

"Don't pull anything like that,' Anthony said. 'It might get out, and it would raise the dickens at the factory—Persis drivers betting against each other. But I think you'll give that big stiff a race myself. So we'll forget it.'

"I could see that Louie thought I was getting the worst of it, and maybe I was; but I was sore at Shurz, so I slipped a few dollars to Connie Miles, and he bet Shurz that I'd beat him. Shurz said he'd take all of that kind of money he could get. Before the race, one way or another, he had about a thousand on himself and Webster against me or the field, and as it was my friends that were betting, I tuned the old Persis up a notch and went out after 'em.

"The drawings put Webster and Shurz both ahead of me. I was No. 14, and had some real contenders all around me when we started. You probably remember what happened. Want it all, eh? Well, here goes, then.

"It was Bill Shurz I was after, see? And I didn't care much where Webster finished, because I had a notion that he wouldn't finish at all. I had a look at his car in the garage, and if I had been Webster I wouldn't have expected an awful lot out of her. Little things, here and there, you know—nothing you could condemn her for, but just generally not up to the scratch. And Webster had never won a tonneau full of cups, either.

"When I got the gun, I went up the line looking for Shurz, and about the twenty-fifth lap I found him. I figured that it wouldn't do any harm to have him a little nervous, so on the twenty-seventh I cut inside him at the Nevada Avenue turn, and passed him with about two inches to spare between hub-caps. Then I slowed down suddenly on the back stretch, and he almost broke his brake-rods to avoid hitting me. I stopped at the pits that time around, and let him go by me; and about the thirty-fifth I passed him again, awful close, although that time

it took all the driving I knew to do it. He was a good driver, all right, but he didn't savvy the course as well as I did, and he didn't have the confidence he needed to make him as dangerous as he ought to have been.

"By this time Webster was in third position, I was seventh, and Shurz was right behind me. In the forty-first lap Webster blew up and went out. I found later that he had everything a driver could have but luck. His cylinders were full of carbon, his tires were in shreds, his engine was hot, and his carburetor was all gummed up. I think he had broken one spring, too. It was about as I had figured it—his car wasn't up to the strain, and he had been pushing her along at a pace that was a bit too fast for her. So that left Shurz and myself, and when he heard about Webster's breakdown at the pits he began to get worried.

"I didn't help him any. For ten laps he tried to pass me every mile of the going, but I managed to pull out of it every time and keep him back in the smoke. Of course, this sort of elimination contest speeded us up, and it wasn't long before I was in fourth place, with Shurz hanging on my gas-tank. We changed positions once or twice, when one or the other of us had to pull in to the pits for gas or a new wheel or something, but I was lucky enough to get my place ahead of him in a few laps, and it began to shake his nerve.

"He tried his big play in the fifty-eighth, with four laps to go. It was at the slow turn leading into the Ocean Front stretch, and we were making about seventy miles an hour, with only two cars leading us. I was just breaking in toward the fence at the curve when I heard his car coming outside me. He had one good burst of speed up his sleeve that he had been saving, and he was going to try to pass me on the up side. Believe me, it takes some driver and some car to pull that play, and if I hadn't been watching him I believe he would have surprised me and done it.

"But Bill Shurz was the man who had called me an orange-picker and told me he would show me where to head in at, and I was in the race to make him take those things back. Instead of making a straight drive for it, I pulled out into the course in his path. Of course, he had to turn in; but he didn't turn fast enough, because,

before he could cut it, I was back on the fence again. You can't wander all over a narrow track at seventy miles an hour without skidding some, and that last move of mine almost jerked the poor old Persis broadside on. Shurz must have thought at first that I was off my head, and he checked his car—I could tell that even above the roar of the exhausts and the yelling of the crowds.

"Of course, the whole thing happened in about two whispers. I straightened her out and yelled to Smithers, my mechanic, to grab the wheel. He reached over quick and got hold of her just as she pointed her nose down the stretch. Then I threw up my hands, pulled myself half out of my seat, and looked around at Shurz with my mouth open.

"I'll never forget his face. He thought my car was going over, and he swung clear and shut off his gas. His nerve was gone. I heard him rattle and bump back there in the dust; then the crowds screamed, and there came the sound of fence-boards splitting, and a thud.

"I had my wheel again, and Smithers looked over his shoulder.

"'He went into the outside fence,' he yelled in my ear, and I stepped on the throttle and went away at ninety-six miles.

"The newspapers printed the story that Shurz gave them—remember? Said he had skidded when I tried to foul him, and then he'd lost a rear wheel and gone smash. As a matter of fact, I hadn't tried to foul him—I'd only lost control of my car for a minute, which is racing luck, and the officials told Shurz so.

"I drove into fourth place; Shurz didn't finish, nor Webster either, of course. And when the committee decided that Shurz hadn't been fouled or interfered with, it broke his heart. He didn't have nerve enough left to be mad. As I said, I think he began to consider leaving the racing game about the time his boat skidded out into that fence and ruined a little roadster that was parked there. He and his mechanic got off with a few scratches, but Shurz didn't say anything more about orange-pickers.

"Of course, the clean-up left him strapped. He had bet his wad on beating me, he didn't have a look-in at the purse, his car was in the shops, he was sued by the owner of the roadster he'd wrecked, and

every one on the "row" was laughing at his hard-luck stories. You know yourself that a race driver don't get much sympathy when he blames defeats on luck. So Shurz didn't hang around very long, but went back to Detroit. Now comes this telegram of yours, and that's all."

III

MONTE relighted his cigar and rose.

"Wait a minute, there," I said. "That isn't all, by quite a distance. You haven't told me about the lady."

Monte reddened.

"Say, that's right. What does the wire say—'Rumored that there's a woman in the case'—wasn't it? I forgot about that. Bill Shurz had a girl out here from Detroit. Her folks were tourists, staying at Pasadena. Louie Anthony introduced me to her—name was Miss Purcell. Bill told Anthony that Miss Purcell wouldn't marry

him unless he'd promise to quit driving races."

"Thanks," I said, prepared to go. "That finishes the story. He retires from the racing game, goes into business, and marries Miss What's-her-name, and they live happily ever after."

"No," Monte corrected, reddening again; "that's the funny part of it. Miss Purcell told him that she didn't care about marrying a man with a yellow streak in him, and sent him back his ring."

"Fine!" I said. "That ought to make some feature! Where is this Miss Purcell now—out here on the coast? I'd like to have a talk with her."

"Would you?" Monte Merrick said doubtfully. "Well, you might, if you don't write anything about it. Wait till I wash up, and then come on down to Levy's with me. She's going to meet me there at six o'clock."

THE WOMEN

"Why are you idle at the door?"

One woman to another said.

"The dust is dark upon your floor

That was so white, so white, before."

"I'm tired," one woman said.

"What are you hearing that you stay?"

One woman to another said.

"There's silence in the fields to-day,

And down along the woodland way."

"True, they sing not," one said.

"What are you watching over there?"

One woman to another said.

"The land is empty as the air;

Best give your hale man's house your care."

"He marched the first," one said.

"Why are you shutting your two eyes?"

One woman to another said.

"Pick up your lad's ox-goad that lies

As if he flung it sudden-wise."

"He marched to-day," one said.

Above them high an eagle flew

From some far mountain head;

Sweat from their brows the hot sun drew;

One woman spoke again: "I, too,

Am thinking of my dead!"

Wilton Agnew Barrett



THE STAGE

By Matthew White, Jr.



DICKENS IN GALA GARB



F "David Copperfield," Dickens's favorite story of all that he wrote, there have been dramatizations almost innumerable. The latest, called "The Highway of Life," by Louis N. Parker, author of "Pomander Walk" and "Disraeli" has been done with extreme reverence for the text, and with an elaborate scenic investiture that would have made glad the heart of the novelist, enamored as he was of the theater.

It was to have been the autumn offering at His Majesty's in London, with Sir Herbert Tree doubling as *Micawber* and *Dan'l Peggotty*. The war caused a change of plans, so the first performance on any stage took place at Wallack's in New York. Lennox Pawle, Mr. Parker's son-in-law, realized a long-cherished ambition to step forth as *Micawber*. As *Brooke-Hoskyn*, the pompous butler in "Pomander Walk," Mr. Pawle registered his first American success at this same theater four years ago. At that time Mrs. Pawle, then known as Dorothy Parker, created the French girl who, with her mother—acted by Sybil Carlisle, at present in the cast of that enticing light comedy, "A Pair of Silk Stockings"—occupied another of the houses in the quaint Thames-side row.

I could wish that Mr. Parker had stuck to his first intention of making *Dora* the central figure in the female interest of his dramatization. His chief objection to her as the heroine was her early death; but by taking up his *Copperfield* at a younger stage he might have overcome even this handicap. And what a refreshing novelty a "Copperfield" play minus its lacrimose *Little Em'ly* would have been!

Fresh from his multimillionaire of "The Money Makers"—a play which, in spite of its name, failed to enrich its sponsors—came Emmet Corrigan for *Dan'l Peggotty*. *Betsey Trotwood* fell to Eva Vincent, for whom the late Clyde Fitch wrote some striking parts of the parvenu type—as, for instance, that of the red-headed step-mother in "Her Own Way," a dozen years ago.

The Lieblers were especially happy in their selection of a *Mrs. Micawber* in the person of Maggie Holloway Fisher, who has been on the boards twenty-five years, half of them with Charles Frohman's comedians. She spent days digging out and fashioning the costume she wears as *Mrs. Micawber*, and I am sure no one ever murdered a song more successfully than she when called upon to respond with one at *David's* dinner-party.

By the bye, an astonishingly faithful imitation of her languishing airs is given by

Philip Tonge, when, as *Traddles*, he reads *Micawber's* letter. Tonge, son of an English actor in "The Garden of Paradise," is only nineteen, and *Traddles* is his first grown-up part. J. V. Bryant, the *Copperfield*, and Vernon Steele, *Steerforth*, are also from the other side of the ocean, where Steele enacted *Romeo* to the *Juliet* of Phyllis Neilson-Terry, who has recently made her own American debut.

O. P. Heggie deserves more than a passing word of commendation because of the things he refrains from doing as *Uriah Heep*. He is not forever going through that waterless washing of the hands supposed to be the earmark of *Wickfield's* clerk. He does it just enough to lend color to the impersonation, and relies on the ensemble of make-up and impersonation to accomplish the rest. Mr. Heggie is the actor who made such a striking impression with his fit of hysterics as the younger brother in "The New Sin," presented in this same theater two years ago.

There are ten different sets in "The Highway of Life," all charming or effective as the case may be. For the background of *Mr. Wickfield's* garden at Canterbury we have a glimpse of the famous cathedral, and from *Betsey Trotwood's* domain we get a view of the chalk cliffs and downs at Dover. A happy conceit throws shadow pictures of the principal characters upon a sheet as they cross the stage just before the first curtain rises.

TO REFORM THE PLAYGOER

In stark contrast to "Copperfield" there came to Broadway on the very next night another offering in ten scenes, or episodes, as they are termed on the program. This was "Experience," a morality play by George V. Hobart, who has graduated into the thesis drama by way of the musical comedy libretto.

The idea of "Experience" is not new, the story being along much the same lines as "Everywoman" and Mr. Hobart's own skit for one of the "Follies," "Everywife." In "Experience," however, the leading figure



MIRIAM COLLINS AS LOVE AND WILLIAM ELLIOTT AS YOUTH IN THE FIRST ACT OF THE THOUGHT-COMPELLING PLAY, "EXPERIENCE"

is a man, *Youth*, admirably set forth by William Elliott, who returns to the stage after an absence of three years, having meanwhile fulfilled a dream of his own youth, that of becoming a producing manager.

to know the stage thoroughly, on every side. That is why I turned from straight drama and took up musical comedy."

Mr. Elliott looks not one whit older than he did ten years ago when I first



GRACE ELLISTON AS JUANITA AND WILLIAM FARNUM AS BAD ANSE IN "THE BATTLE-CRY," DRAMATIZED FROM THE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL PRINTED LAST JANUARY IN MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

From a photograph by White, New York

He explained this ambition to a reporter in 1911 to account for his abandonment of purely dramatic work, such as he did with fine results in "*Madame X*," in order to create the juvenile lover in "*The Pink Lady*."

"To be a producer," he said, "I want

made his acquaintance. He was then with Robert Hilliard in "*That Man and I*." He was only nine, and still a schoolboy, when he first went on the stage, playing the tambourine one night, the violin the next, and a banjo the third in a concert company belonging to his uncle. Upon his graduation



CONSTANCE WOLFE, THE CLEVER CHILD, WITH FREDERICK PERRY AND MARY RYAN IN THE SEASON'S FIRST AND STRIKING HIT, "ON TRIAL," A PLAY THAT MOVES BACKWARD

From a photograph by White, New York



BARBARA ALLEN, INGÉNUÉ, AND CAROLINE BAYLEV, LEADING WOMAN, AT A TENSE MOMENT IN THE
SECOND ACT OF THE LITTLE THEATER'S PLEASING COMEDY,
"A PAIR OF SILK STOCKINGS"

he spent some months trying to learn dentistry, but the call to the footlights was in his blood, and he answered it by becoming a super with Fanny Davenport's company at the Boston Theater.

Thus Mr. Elliott has been everything around a theater except a star, and it is only his own modesty that prevents his putting his name in incandescents above "Experience," at the Booth. For two years he was associated in producing with David Belasco—whose son-in-law he is—and his first individual venture as manager was made last season with "Kitty MacKay," one of the hits.

Ben Johnson, acting the name-part in "Experience," is best remembered for his *Jimsey* in the original "Paid in Full" cast. He was also a member of the New Theater company. Charles A. Stevenson, the *Wealth*, is the husband of Kate Claxton, and created *King Louis XV* for Mrs. Leslie Carter in "Du Barry." Margot Williams, a newcomer to the stage as *Intoxication* and *Frailty*, emerged into a recognition that will make her name worth remembering.

If Manhattan playgoers are not thoroughly reformed by springtime it will not be for lack of effort on the theater's

part. "Experience" is so heavily freighted with warnings against the pitfalls of a great city that certain haunts of alleged

pleasure in the Times Square neighborhood might almost have a case against the play on the grounds of restraint of trade. In "The Miracle Man" the advantages of the straight and narrow path are nightly proclaimed with such emphasis that if the audiences heed the lesson it may prove necessary to widen the heavenward thoroughfare in order to accommodate the crowds.

In "The Battle-Cry" uplift and gun-play form about equal parts. Those who enjoyed this story by Charles Neville Buck, printed in last January's issue of *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE*, will be delighted with the play, which sticks closely to the original text, with no jarring side excursions, and without any introduction of new characters to help the dramatizer out of tight places.

He has solved some of his problems by the use of moving pictures—the first time, so far as I am aware, that the film has been employed in this way outside of melodrama or musical

comedy. Highly effective are these camera helps to the action, particularly in the fight outside *Juanita's* cottage in the



MARIE TEMPEST ON A FAREWELL TOUR OF AMERICA IN HIGH-CLASS COMEDIES

From her latest photograph by Fowisham & Banfield, London



ELSIE FERGUSON, WHO HAS MADE HER BIGGEST HIT AS MIRIAM IN HUBERT HENRY DAVIES'S
NEWEST PLAY "OUTCAST"

From her latest photograph by the Geisler Studio, New York

last act, where *Bad Anse* is sorely wounded and crawls back through the grass to die beside the woman he loves. On the screen we see him painfully lift himself to the door-latch; then the scene shifts to the cottage interior, and we behold *Bad Anse* in the flesh and blood person of William Farnum—who also posed for the pictures—as he falls in a dead faint into the arms of the school-teacher.

Mr. Farnum, a brother of Dustin, with whom he appeared in "The Littlest Rebel," is a Bostonian, like William Elliott. His fine physical development made him an ideal *Ben-Hur* when he played that perennial hero for Klaw & Erlanger some few years since. It is no reflection on his histrionic abilities to say that his biceps fits admirably into the reader's conception of *Bad Anse*.

Juanita Holland, the "lady from Philadelphia," falls to Grace Elliston, who did her best previous work in "The Lion and the Mouse." Her selection for the heroine in a Southern play was appropriate, for she was born in West Virginia and it was in Memphis, Tennessee, that she made her first public appearance in the operetta, "Boccaccio." This was under her own name, Grace Rutter, which she used for some time after coming North to act in such musical pieces as "The Idol's Eye," with Frank Daniels. But her ambition was always for straight dramatic work. In winding up a notice of "The Idol's Eye," as presented at the Casino, one of the critics wrote:

There were others that were clever—and one little beauty of a maid, whose eyes played havoc with the audience. Her name is Grace Rutter, and she will be a star some day.

Her first step toward this end was a change of name, so that she would not be associated with musical shows. She resigned from one of the latter and refused to accept any more offers that required singing. In 1899 we find her as Grace Elliston at the old Lyceum on Fourth Avenue, with Daniel Frohman's stock company, playing the ingénue in "His Excellency the Governor" with distinction and charm.

A CHAT WITH MARIE TEMPEST

Three days after her New York opening in Henry Arthur Jones's high comedy, "Mary Goes First," I had my first in-

terview with Marie Tempest. She is a charming woman to meet, without a particle of pose, and as impersonal in talking about her work as if it were chilled steel and she were the president of the company that manufactured it. Naturally delighted over the enthusiastic reception of the first offering in what is billed as her farewell American tour, she is somewhat surprised as well.

"Mr. Jones's satire on English politics is so wholly British," she explained, "that I feared only a British public would comprehend and appreciate it. When I did the piece at the Playhouse in London, royalty came several times to see it, and Queen Mary was much amused by the thrusts at social traditions that no one had ever dared to hold up for ridicule before. Now your American audiences are keener for plays of sentiment, I fancy, such as 'Peg o' My Heart'; you are not, as a people, so apt to stifle your real feelings as are we English."

Marie Tempest, who was born in London, made her début in "Boccaccio," like Miss Elliston, and remained in the musical end of the business until a row over tights in "San Toy" got her out of it in 1899. For five years she had been George Edwardes's big card at the London Daly's in "An Artist's Model," "The Geisha," and other hits.

"It was not because I refused to wear tights, but because I insisted on them," said Miss Tempest, in referring to the incident, "that Mr. Edwardes and I had our split. He declared that the English conventions called for knickerbockers.

"'Hang English conventions,' I told him. 'San Toy is Oriental, not English. Imagine a *Nanki Poo* in knickerbockers! You can't. Neither can I.'

"So there and then I not only parted from dear old George Edwardes, but from musical comedy as well. And heartily glad I was to get out of it. Not only was it dreadfully boring standing around while the low comedians uttered their alleged witticisms, but the words of the songs I had to sing got on my nerves. What did I do next? Well, I looked about for a comedy that might suit me. And the first place I turned was to Anthony Hope, a friend of mine. He came to the door, I remembered, and let me in himself.

"'I want a play from you for myself,' I began at once.

"Well, I have one, but it isn't any good," he answered with supreme frankness.

"Let me judge of that," I countered. 'Produce the script and let me read it.'

"It then developed that the only copy he could locate was being considered by Julia Neilson and Fred Terry. He got it back from them eventually. It was 'English Nell,' made from one of his

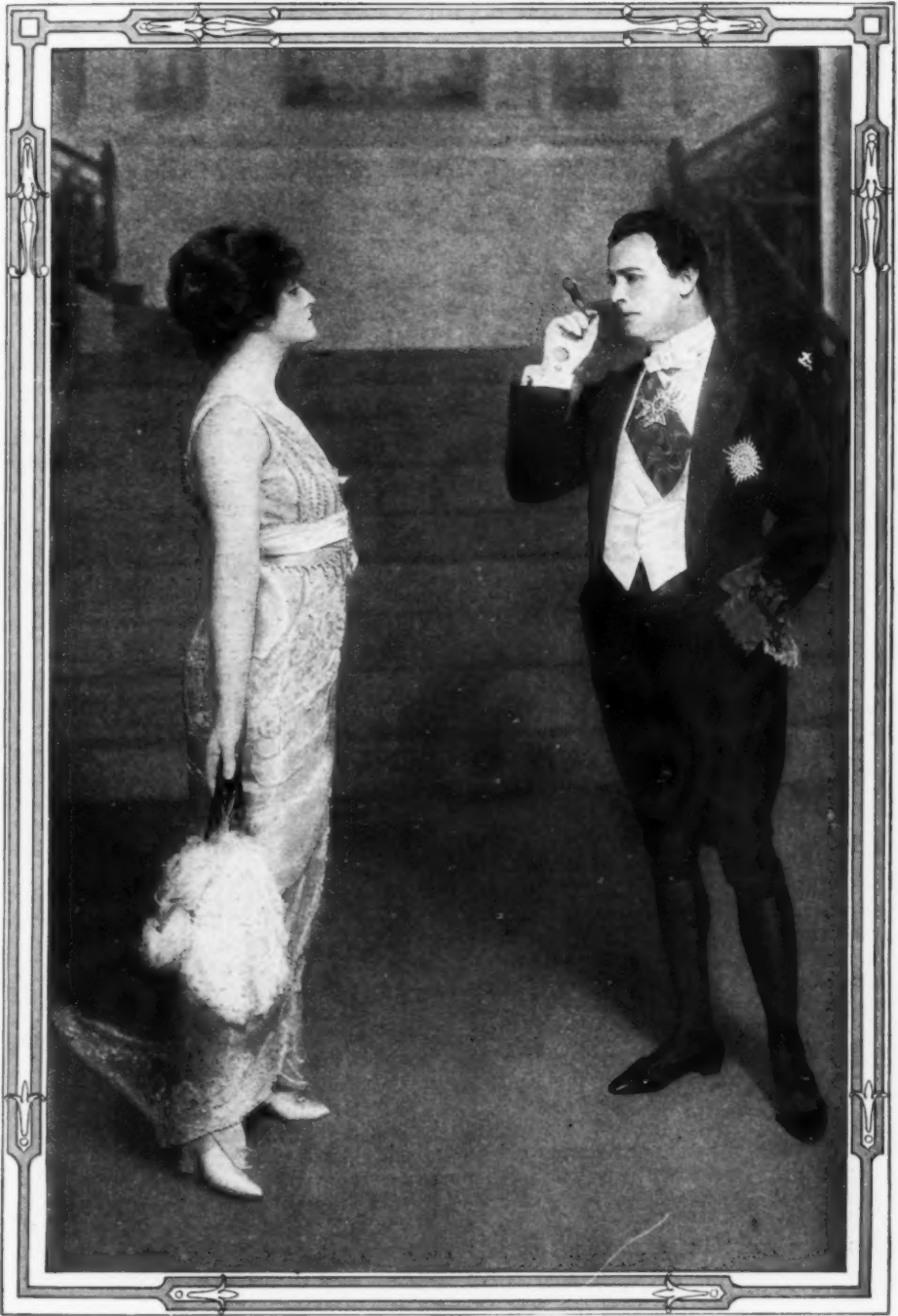


books. I took to the thing at once, and in due course I appeared as *Nell Gwynne* at the Prince of Wales's Theater, where I have done most of my producing. Fortunately the public liked the piece too; so *voilà!* I had crossed my bridge and was safely landed in the realm of the legitimate.

"This is my first visit to the United States in some five



JANE GREY, JACK BARRYMORE AS HER HUSBAND, AND PAUL EVERTON AS THE DETECTIVE IN THE BIG SCENE OF "KICK IN"—THE PORTRAIT ABOVE IS OF JOSEPHINE VICTOR, WHO HAS AN IMPORTANT RÔLE IN THE SAME PLAY



LAURA HOPE CREWS AND LEO DITRICHSTEIN AS THEY APPEAR IN THE SECOND ACT OF "THE PHANTOM RIVAL," WITH THE STAR IN THE GUISE OF THE FAMOUS DIPLOMAT

From a photograph by White, New York

years. When I was here last I played *Becky Sharp* in a new version of 'Vanity Fair,' at your New Theater. Ah, there was what I considered the most beautiful playhouse on which I have ever laid eyes. But it was too large, too magnificent, for the mission such an enterprise must fulfil."

Miss Tempest is an optimist of the first water. She has no patience with people—certain playwrights, for example—who go about deploring the depravity of public taste, and then affect to write down to meet it.

"Believe in yourself," she proclaims as her gospel. "Have the courage of your convictions, and feel that the other man is going to like what you offer him because it is good, because it is of the best that is in you. If you are a star, don't accept a play on a title. I did that not so long ago. Some one brought me a comedy with the name, 'The Handful.' Every one about the theater was wildly enthusiastic. 'Immense!' they cried. 'Marie Tempest, the handful! It's a sure go.' I was not so certain myself, but I gave in, we produced the play, and it proved the worst frost we ever encountered."

A BELASCO STAR AND HIS LEADING LADY

While it may be years before Leo Dittrichstein finds a play that fits him as snugly as did "The Concert," the four separate and distinct impersonations he is called on to give in "The Phantom Rival" are probably a joy unto his soul.

It is just twenty years ago that his *Zou Zou* in "Trilby" made this Austrian actor famous. As a child he had been intended for either the church or the army. Delicate health threw the die in the ecclesiastical direction, and at the age of ten he was sent to an institution that undertook to prepare him for the priesthood. But the spirit of mischief, linked with an in-born trend toward mimicry, brought about his dismissal after a four years' course.

The family fortunes had meanwhile shrunk, so that a career as an army officer had now become out of the question. His father then determined to make a mechanical engineer of him, and four more years were spent in preparation for this work. But alas, young Dittrichstein, although scoring high in languages, literature, and history, was woefully deficient in the most important branch of all—higher mathematics. His school chum was the

son of the popular Viennese actor, Adolf von Sonnenthal. Dittrichstein's natural bent toward the stage was further inclined that way by association with young Sonnenthal, and his success as *Hermann* in a school presentation of "The Robbers," given to celebrate Schiller's birthday, became the determining factor as to his future.

In spite of strong parental opposition, he made his professional debut in a small city of Bavaria. This was in "The Private Secretary," and he continued to act in minor stock companies until some manager decided that he had a voice and put him into comic opera, where he worked his way up as a lyric tenor until he reached cities like Dresden and Vienna. But he wasn't enamored of the singing line, so went back to drama, and while playing in Berlin was engaged by Gustav Amberg for the German company in New York. Here Charles Frohman saw him and made him an offer, conditioned, of course, on his learning the language. He studied hard, and in seven months was equipped to play *Dickenson* in "Mr. Wilkinson's Widows."

Glancing back at the "Trilby" cast, it is of interest to note that Mr. Dittrichstein is the only member of the famous original company of 1895 who is before the public at this writing. Wilton Lackaye, the *Sven-gali*, is just now hunting a suitable play. Burr McIntosh, the *Taffy*, after many years of absence from the boards, returned to them in the autumn with "Cordelia Blossom," which soon withered. Virginia Harned, the *Trilby*, is seen only spasmodically in vaudeville. Ernest Glendinning, who is giving such a good account of himself in "The Big Idea," is oftener to the fore than is his father, John Glendinning, who was the *Laird*. Alfred Hickman, the *Little Billee*, another Englishman, was here with Robert Loraine in "Man and Superman," but he may now be on the fighting front in France.

Last season saw Mr. Dittrichstein at Belasco's in "The Temperamental Journey," which did not afford him anything like the opportunities that he had in "The Concert," or those that he enjoys now in "The Phantom Lover." His leading woman in the latter is Laura Hope Crews, who joins the Belasco forces after eight years with Henry Miller.

In the course of a chat with her, mention of her first New York engagement, with the old Murray Hill stock, recalled the fact



PHYLLIS NEILSON-TERRY, DAUGHTER OF FRED TERRY AND JULIA NEILSON, NOW ON HER FIRST
TOUR OF AMERICA AS VIOLA, IN "TWELFTH NIGHT"

From her latest photograph by Burford, London



GABRIELLE DORZIAT AND WILLIAM FAVERSHAM IN THE CARD EPISODE THAT PRECIPITATES
THE BIG SCENE OF THE MIDDLE ACT OF "THE HAWK"

From a photograph by White, New York

that Frances Starr, also with Mr. Belasco and soon to appear in a new play, was likewise a member of the Lexington Avenue company of twice-a-day players. Miss Crews, who is a native of California, served three years in this artistic treadmill, acting twelve times a week in one piece, besides rehearsing for another and learning her part in a third.

Hannah May Ingham, the first leading woman there, succumbed in harness, and at last there came a day when Miss Crews said to her mother:

"I can't commit my lines. I must give up and get away!"

She went to England, fondly imagining that because she had played a regular en-

gagement in New York, the metropolis of America, it would be a simple matter to secure a position in London.

"George Alexander, now Sir George, of the St. James's, offered me a place," Miss Crews told me in the course of her reminiscences; "but as the salary he named was only a pound a week, and I must supply my own costumes, you may imagine I did not jump at the chance. I came back to America, and then began that weary tramp up and down Broadway, in and out of managers' offices, looking for a job. Miss Starr was engaged in the same apparently hopeless quest, and often, when we met, we used to seek out some secluded nook where we could weep out our discouragement."

ment on one another's shoulders. But I am sure neither of us would wish now that we had missed those Murray Hill days and nights of training!"

Last season Miss Crews was leading woman for John Drew in "Much Ado About Nothing," and in the revival of "A Tyranny of Tears."

Two players, recently with Mr. Ditrichstein at the Belasco, figure in the newest drama of the underworld, which was originally called "Birds of Prey," but on which somebody wished the appalling title of "Kick In" for its Broadway showing. These two are Jane Grey, the composer's affinity in "The Concert," and Josephine Victor, the innkeeper's daughter in "The Temperamental Journey." In "Kick In," Miss Grey is the reformed forger's loyal wife, while Miss Victor exhibits marvelous control as the woman who hears of the death of her lover.

Miss Victor, who was born in Hungary, is a linguist, and an ardent devotee of outdoor sports. Her New York debut was made in 1907 as the adopted daughter in "The Secret Orchard," and in the following year she appeared with Wilton Lackaye in "The Battle." Two seasons later found her as the *Hen Pheasant* with Maude Adams in "Chantecler," and last spring she was in "The Yellow Ticket." "Kick In" was originally written by Willard Mack as a playlet for his own use in vaudeville. As a full evening's entertainment despite the depressing atmosphere that permeates its four acts, it was favorably received. It has already outlasted another of Mr. Woods's many enterprises—his attempt to put dollar drama for a run on Broadway, made with John Mason in "Big Jim Garriety." The latter made a good start, as I recorded last month, but failed to win any lasting favor.



ALICE DOVEY, AS SHE APPEARS IN "PAPA'S DARLING," THE NEW MUSICAL COMEDY WITH MUSIC BY IVAN CARVILL, WHO WROTE "THE PINK LADY"

From her latest photograph by White, New York

An eminently capable cast helps in getting "Kick In" over. Jack Barrymore, far afield from his "Affairs of Anatole," is the reformed forger who falls afoul of the police by helping out a backsliding pal. Forrest Winant, once the *Country Boy*, does perhaps the finest work of his young career as a dope fiend.

BY THEIR TITLES YOU WILL KNOW THEM

In the cast with Josephine Victor in "The Battle" we find the name of Elsie Ferguson, who began at the foot of the ladder if any one ever did. Born in New York, she started in the chorus of a road company playing "The Belle of New York," and her first season's record was twenty-eight weeks of one-night stands. How much smoother the way would have seemed if she had foreseen that with her fifteenth subsequent part she would become a star! This was in 1909, in Channing Pollock's play, "Such a Little Queen."

She was starred again as *Dolly Madison* in "The First Lady in the Land," and last season in "The Strange Woman," but it was not until she stepped forth as *Miriam* in "Outcast," two months ago, that she really came into her own. This play, written by Hubert Henry Davies, author of "The Mollusc" and "Cousin Kate," was originally produced on the 1st of September at Wyndham's, in London, where it is still running. The *Miriam* over there is none other than Ethel Levey, formerly with George Cohan in musical shows.

Somber indeed is this story about a woman whom a young blood calls in from the streets because he wishes to apologize for hitting the feather of her hat with a stream from a siphon. There is scarcely a line of so-called "comedy relief"; all the more credit, then, to Mr. Davies and to Miss Ferguson for holding the interest tense, as they certainly do. It is the playwright who falters a bit at the very end, but Miss Ferguson's splendid art saves the situation, and one comes away with a satisfying sense of having seen a play which, if it treads life's usually hidden pathways, at least moves therein with sincerity and adroitness.

Miriam is a rôle after an actress's own heart—which does not mean that it is therefore easy to play. The temptation to overact is constantly present. It is Miss Ferguson's avoidance of this pitfall that won her success.

Her leading man is Charles Cherry, last seen only the week before at the same theater—the Lyceum—in "The Beautiful Adventure," which was sent on tour without him.

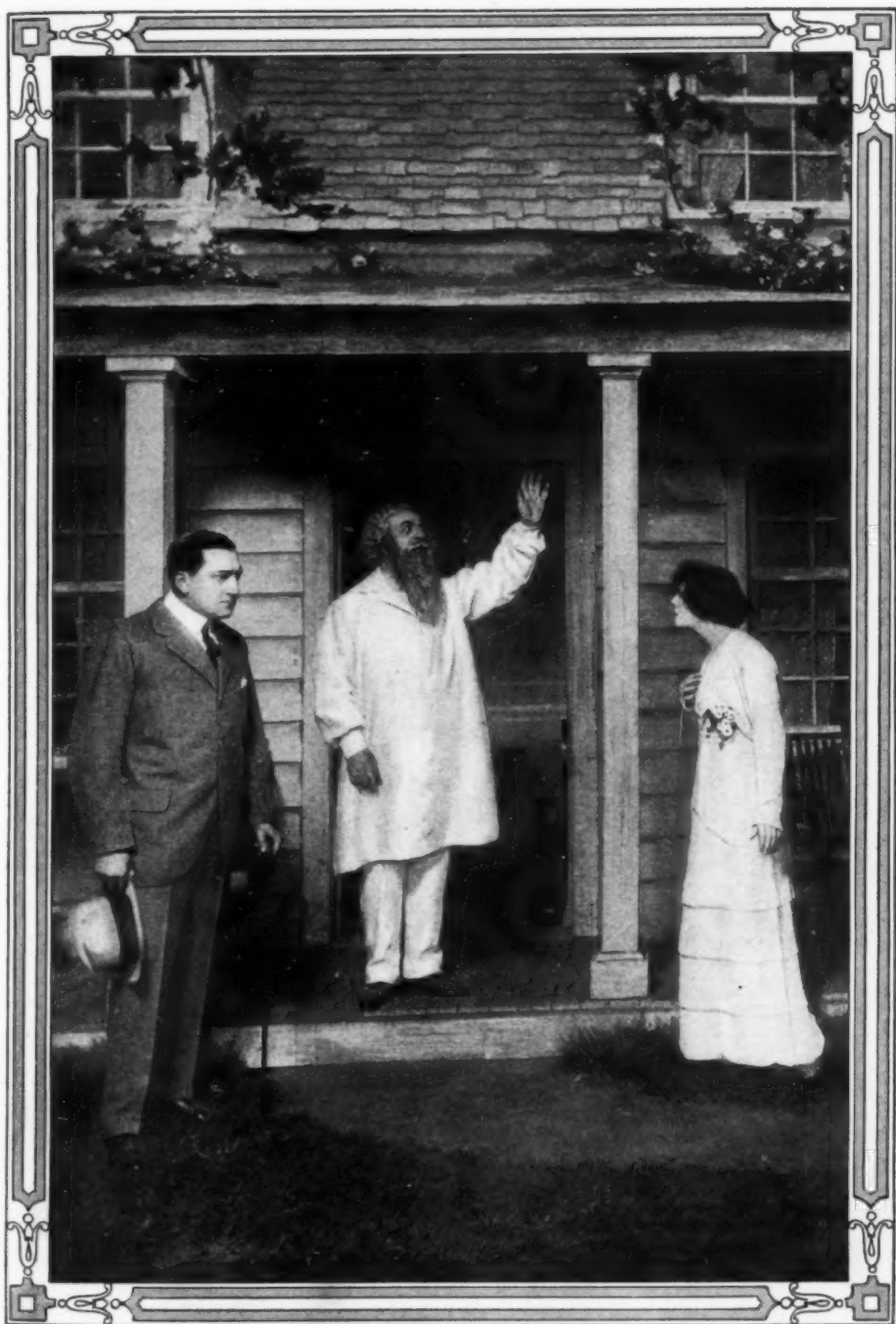
Of the same drab hue as "Outcast" is "That Sort," Nazimova's new vehicle, likewise by an English writer, Basil MacDonald Hastings, author of "The New Sin." The Russian actress is discovered at curtain-rise stretched out on the floor beside the bed, a would-be suicide in a London hotel. The star thus heroically renounces her chance for a reception on entrance, a right usually safeguarded with jealous care by the stellar fraternity. *Diana Laska*, divorced by her husband, and denied sight of her daughter, has become a notorious woman; but now, with age coming on, she longs intensely for her child, and has tried to kill herself because of failure to accomplish her desire. Women of "that sort" do not usually possess such longings, and herein the play is weak. Nevertheless, it affords Nazimova abundant opportunity to put over the kind of work she does best.

Efficient support is given by Beatrice Prentice—last year with "The Lure"—as the daughter, and by Charles Bryant, to whom Nazimova was married in 1912, when he was playing with her as *Dr. Meyer Isaacson* in "Bella Donna." He is once more a doctor in "That Sort."

In this play morphin is again in evidence, making the seventh of the present season's Broadway productions in which the "needle habit" is saddled on some one of the characters, the others being "Kick In," "The Miracle Man," "Experience," "Big Jim Garrity," "Outcast," and "The Hawk."

PLAYERS IN "THE HAWK"

Apropos of "The Hawk," my last previous view of Mlle. Dorziat was under rather depressing conditions. It was in London, during the early summer of 1913, when she was appearing as what I might call half the heroine in Baron de Rothschild's more or less autobiographical play, "Cræsus." But even under the handicap of a drama preceded by ructions destined to failure, and introducing a second leading woman in its third act, Mlle. Dorziat made good, and her reception with Mr. Faversham in New York amounted to little short of a triumph.



GEORGE NASH AS "DOC" MADISON, WILLIAM H. THOMPSON AS THE PATRIARCH, AND GAIL HAMILTON AS HELENA VAIL IN "THE MIRACLE MAN," DRAMATIZED BY GEORGE M. COHAN FROM THE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL PRINTED IN MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE LAST FEBRUARY



OLIVE TELL AS MRS. OLIVER IN "THE MARRIAGE GAME"

From a photograph by Davis & Sanford, New York

She was a French girl of scarcely more than thirteen, learning to become a milliner, when an actress friend of the family happened along and told her that the stage, not the bonnet-shop, should be her life-work. Forthwith she gave up hats, studied hard—as is the habit in France—for two years, made her début in Brussels, and a little later became a member of the Gymnase company in Paris.

William Faversham has been in America so long that we have almost come to regard him as one of our native players. But

he was born in London in 1868, and first elected the army as a career. The stage, however, claimed him before he was old enough for a commission, and in 1888 he came to New York. Here he acted *Parkyn* in "The Highest Bidder," when the unexpected success of that comedy put its leading man, E. H. Sothern, in the pathway of stardom.

After having been an important member of Charles Frohman's stock company at the Empire from 1893 to 1901, Mr. Faversham registered his own hit as a star

just ten years ago in "The Squaw Man." For the past two or three seasons he has devoted himself to Shakespeare. Whatever he does he does well, and he has come to rank in the forefront of our actor-managers.

Effective work in "The Hawk" is done by Conway Tearle as the lover. The son of Osmond Tearle, a well-known English player, and of Minnie Conway, this clever and personable actor was born in America and remained here until his tenth year. After that, his education was completed in England, where his brother Godfrey is also on the stage. Since young Tearle's return to America he has rather specialized in villains, having been one in the short-lived "Rack," another with Louis Mann in "Elevating a Husband," and yet another in "The Sins of Society."

THE PUNCH AND JUDY THEATER

New York's brief list of actor-managers has just received an addition—a noteworthy one, too, in that Charles Hopkins is the only one of them in America who owns the theater in which he acts. To be sure, this Punch and Judy Theater, which seats two hundred and ninety-nine persons, and which was opened on November 10 in West Forty-Ninth Street, is a tiny affair, but very quaint and attractive withal. It is not sumptuous, like the Little, nor conventional, like the Princess, but unique and restful in its severe Elizabethan lines.

Mr. Hopkins is a young man, a graduate of Yale, with an inborn love of the theater and an experience on the stage that includes service with Ben Greet, with John Drew, with a stock organization in Washington, and in his own company at the Fine Arts Theater in Chicago.

I can easily imagine the appeal of "The Marriage of Columbine" to Mr. Hopkins for his opening bill. Its mid-Victorian atmosphere and circus flavor alike cried out to him to be placed against the background of this old-fashioned playhouse. And in many respects the selection proved a happy one.

Mrs. Hopkins, formerly Miss Vivian with Ben Greet, makes a charming *Columbine*, and Louise Closser Hale's aged bareback rider is the most finished piece of work she has done since her *Prossy*, the typist, in "Candida." Herbert Yost, who first leaped into notice as the troubled lover in "Over Night," couldn't be bet-

tered as the over-righteous printer who gets *Columbine* to marry him to save her soul. Edward Emery, who was in "The Five Frankforters," appeals strongly to the sympathies of the audience, as does Mr. Hopkins himself—the clown who radiates good humor outside of the ring as well as in it.

In aroma and characterization, Harold Chapin, another American playwright who elects to live in England, has done good work in "The Marriage of Columbine." Marie Tempest has a comedy of his, "Art and Opportunity," which she did in London last year, and is in her repertoire here.

"THE ONLY GIRL" AND "PAPA'S DARLING"

Some two seasons ago Frank Mandel adapted a comedy from the German of Ludwig Fulda, called it "Our Wives," and had a hard time in trying to fill Wallack's Theater with audiences to see it. Now, with a libretto by Henry Blossom and a score by Victor Herbert, it has received more favorable notices than—I was going to say than any other show of its sort in town; but there is no other show with which it can be classed.

That's just the charm of the thing. It's quite apart. There's no low comedian, and one has no trouble in keeping track of who's who, as there are only sixteen people in the cast, including the chorus.

Adele Rowland, who used to be with Sam Bernard, is a host in herself. To hear her sing "Here's to the Land We Love, Boys," is really inspiring in these war times, and there are both good comedy and a haunting lilt in "Personality." But it's invidious to mention any of the songs by name, they are all so good.

Another musical play, much more ambitious in scope, is likewise distinguished for its attractive numbers and the efficient company that presents it. This is "Papa's Darling," which deserves a better name, for the music, by Ivan Caryll, falls only behind his "Pink Lady" score for sheer merit. At least three of the people are closely associated with that memorable New Amsterdam hit—Frank Lalor, Alice Dovey, and Jack Henderson.

A duet, "Who Cares?" sung by the two latter, is one of the most charming things heard on the stage this season. In "Papa's Darling," also from the French, Mr. Henderson and Miss Dovey are sweethearts again, just as they were in "The Pink Lady," but both have more to do.

Alice Dovey comes from Plattsmouth, Nebraska, and has been on the stage about a dozen years, beginning in the chorus of "The Strollers." Her talents manifested themselves early, and she soon had her name on the bill. When Henry W. Savage produced the opera of bird life, "Woodland," she was the *Turtle Dove*, and two seasons later she toured the South and West in "The Vanderbilt Cup," taking the rôle originated by Elsie Janis. Miss Dovey became a New York favorite with her creation of *Angèle* in "The Pink Lady," which she played for two seasons, including the London production.

Both Jack Henderson and Frank Lalor were with "The Pink Lady" for the same length of time. Mr. Lalor is a native of Washington, but was brought up in Lawrence, Massachusetts, where his activity in amateur theatricals led to his adopting the stage as a profession. He had been seen in "Coming Thro' the Rye" and "Prince Humbug," but was practically new to Broadway when his *Dondiddier* in "The Pink Lady" made him known there.

By the way, I can think of many worse things that Klaw & Erlanger might do before the season ends than to revive this wondrously attractive piece, which was the means of making the reputation of so many who shared in its success. Besides the three I have mentioned, there are Hazel Dawn, now at the head of a show of her own, "The Débutante," and Alice Hegeman, who was the attenuated and long-suffering *Mrs. Dondiddier*, and who was lately seen here with "Miss Daisy."

BRADY BRAND MELODRAMA

Thompson Buchanan, who had been a newspaper reporter, made a hit with "A Woman's Way," written for Grace George. Early in 1913 another comedy of his, "The Bridal Path," achieved failure because the management insisted that he should inject a "punch" where it didn't belong. Now, not a punch merely but a wallop, and indeed many wallops have landed him in success again with "Life," a melodrama that outthrills even the Drury Lane brand.

The story, once it gets under way, really holds the audience, and the big effects are corking. There is comedy a plenty, too, and the whole is set forth by a cast punctuated by such names as Walter Hampden, of "Servant in the House" fame—in "Life" he is the most despicable villain

of the lot—and Effingham Pinto, first introduced to us by his piano-playing in "The Climax." The two leads fall to two young people comparatively new to Manhattan, but they are played so well that one wishes to know more about the actors. Kathlene MacDonell—who is *Ruth*, the banker's daughter, secretly married to *Bill Reid*, the Yale stroke, afterward accused of murdering her father—was found in one of the road companies playing "Bought and Paid For." John Bowers, the *Bill Reid* aforesaid, comes from Indiana, and created the hero in Philip Bartholomae's comedy, "Little Miss Brown."

Mr. Brady himself, I understand, conceived "Life," which is the first in a series of similar big productions to be written for him by Mr. Buchanan. I mustn't forget to add that motion pictures help out in getting the characters from one point in the plot to another, and incidentally kill time pleasantly while the heavy sets are shifted.

SEEING A PLAY MADE AND SOLD

"The Big Idea"—originally called "Wanted, \$22,000"—most assuredly lives up to its classification as an unusual play. It was written by A. E. Thomas and Clayton Hamilton, and the New York reception of the piece was of the sort to indicate that Broadway is still eager for novelty.

In "The Big Idea" one sees a play in the making, but if you imagine that this is merely the prosaic spectacle of watching a man tear his hair one minute and a sheet of manuscript the next, you have by no means grasped what this really extraordinary entertainment has to offer you. As a matter of fact, it is a drama of tense interest, running the gamut from farce to tragedy, and sometimes skirting the border-land of fantasy. Not once, but often, laughter chases tears away, thus achieving the combination of comedy and pathos so ardently wished for in stageland.

The part of the young playwright, over whom hangs the sword of tragedy in case his play is not sold, falls to Ernest Glendinning. In this deadly serious business he is every bit as convincing as he was last year in the fanciful doings of *Pierrot* with "Prunella." The girl who helps him not only with the play but also in the love interest is Desmond Kelley, lately in "Help Wanted," and the manager from whom they refuse an advance of five hundred dollars is William Courtleigh.

THE WING OF DESTINY

BY RICHARD BUTLER GLAENZER



TRIP to Bermuda is not complete without a day's fishing. This from my guide-book. I trusted in mine. My faith was rewarded, but not by a catch of the usual order.

It was early in the morning—very early, for a tourist—when Red Benny, now gray except for his fiery mustache, dropped anchor off the South Shore reefs just beyond Castle Harbor. The brisk sail had cured me of yawning. I should have been roused, anyhow, by those magic waters. Blue? Every blue in the palette! Not dead blues, but lively, twinkling blues, as wide-awake as Red Benny's eyes.

"It's a bit too sunny," he now grumbled; "but you might hook a grouper."

He handed me a baited line; but the groupers were not to be tempted. An hour passed. In spite of the flower-foamed atolls, the picturesque ruins on near-by Castle Island, the fiddlewoods, ruddied by June, which flamed on the cedared slopes to the west—in spite of all the beauty about me, my interest flagged. I was a tourist. I became drowsy.

And then it happened.

A harsh cry drew my attention aloft. A longtail, the exquisite tropic-bird, was circling our dingey. I drew my revolver, which I had brought along to use on floating bottles, and took aim.

"What are you doing, man?" roared Red Benny.

My arm wavered.

"Is it against the law?"

"It's all of that and more. It's bad luck!"

"What? To kill a bird?"

"A bird of the sea. Aye, any bird, for that matter! I know, I know," he warned me earnestly; and his face, brown and dry as his calabash bail, shone suddenly with sweat.

"Tell me," I asked.

"It's a long story," he said; "and who would believe it?"

"I, for one; and if it is long, it's longer still between bites."

He smiled.

"As you say, sir."

Slowly he filled his pipe and sucked on it for some moments before he began.

II

"IN Hungary, on a height well above the town of—I can't speak it to you, it being as full of z's as that harbor is of sea-eggs; nor does it matter—is a castle that would make yonder ruins look no more'n an ant-heap. The lord of it—and a sure enough lord he is, for all his queer name, same as the town with a 'sky' spliced to the tail of it—was a moody man, as he might well have been, seeing as all the castles and titles in the world can't give back a dead wife nor make sound an ailing child; and her his only one, mind you. But he should ha' spared the young girl his gloom, that he should. A cripple what cannot run after the sun must have it brought to her.

"Poor young thing, with hair the color of the grain-fields she looked on from her terrace; her eyes as dark as the mountains beyond, the Carpathians, if I remember rightly—aye, black eyes, but no darker than her thoughts at times, as she lay there a looking. It was her hip as troubled her, sir. Many's the doctor that worked over it; but it could not be mended for all his lordship's money. Money's grand to have, I 'xpect, but it 'll not buy you a day like this."

Red Benny puffed a while in silence.

"She was eighteen at the time I'm speaking of—eighteen, the time of dreaming and moping. Yet a cheerful soul she was by rights, was Maryska—for that was her name, foreign for Mary; but a sweet name, to my thinking. Maryska of the

Almond Eyes her old nurse would call her, her eyes slanting a bit like the Chinese.

"Where was I? Cheerful, I was saying. And so she would have been always, with fit company; but a moody father and a prim old teacher and a grumbling, if loving, old body of a nurse would not keep heart in a well man. And she was a girl, and eighteen; marooned, one might say. Now and again county ladies would come and fuss over; pity her, I 'xpect. No one grows fat on pity, nor wants it. As for the young chaps, I doubt as they worried to see her, a helpless girl, pretty as she was. Young men is heartless—old ones, too, for that matter.

"Then come a morning in spring when a young stork lands sprawling on her terrace close to where she lies, always watching things or reading. The silly bird had set about flying too soon from its nest up among the chimney-pots. It tries to flutter away, but cannot for a broken wing. Then what does the girl do but have it doctored and nursed like it was a human. She was all heart, was Maryska. And so in time the two cripples becomes fast friends, for all the warning screeches of mother stork. But I 'xpect as the mother bird stops scolding pretty soon, having other young uns to look after.

"Maryska, she gets to love that there scrawny bird same as if he was a prince. He learns manners, and seems to forget his mother and her like. Then comes autumn and all is quiet up among the chimneys. The storks has gone south."

Red Benny paused to let his gaze follow the graceful evolutions of two longtails, their breasts faintly blued as they dipped to the sea.

"Storks!" he resumed. "They fly something wonderful, sir. Five hundred miles a day ain't too much for a beginner. The chaps as summers up round the Baltic sails down to the Cape to steer clear of our winter; then back they fetches in the spring. And right here in these waters the plover is as smart—aye, smarter. You should hear 'em piping through here of a September evening, bound from Fundy to the Orinoco—and in one beat, the wind allowing. Talk about your clippers and your flying-machines—they're only sea-puddings!

"But where was I? Ah, in the autumn, when off sails the storks, leaving Maryska's pet behind. And he seems to know it; for

now he starts fretting. Fed up and spoiled till he's more stuck up 'n any parrot, he begins to sulk and to pull on his chain. For the girl has him fast by a chain, though with leeway and to spare. Loving him, she wishes to hold him. 'Tis the way of all living creatures to wish to keep what falls to them—barring a fish on a hook."

He scowled.

"The groupers are shy to-day. I 'xpect I gab too much."

"Nonsense!" I protested. "It's the sun. Go on! What of the stork?"

"Well, sir, that there bird becomes that peevish there's no longer any pleasing him. He stumps around woful and sickens something painful. The finest victuals ain't good enough for him. It looks as he'd fetch kingdom come unless the tide turns. Maryska worries, like the tender-hearted girl what she is. For, mind you, she knows what's ailing him. Trust a woman for that. I 'xpect she says to herself:

"'Here am I, a sighing 'cause I can't skip around; and what do I do but keep this here bird, as can fly, from flying.'

"I 'xpect them were her thoughts. All heart she was. Leastways, so Darnley allowed."

"Darnley?"

"I'm coming to him."

He knocked the ashes from his pipe, refilled it with exasperating slowness, and wasted three matches before he continued:

"And so she decides to let the stork go. Then she does a strange thing, a strange thing, God bless her! Strange thoughts rise in a girl's head, and strange deeds follow. And why? I'm going to tell you. She takes a bit of paper and writes on it three sets of words, the same in meaning but in different tongues. Then from her neck she unslings a small gold locket with the first letters of her name marked on it in colors like the souvenir gewgaws what they sells over to St. George's. On the four-leaf clover inside of it she lays the paper. Then she stows the locket under the stork's wing, lashing it on with the fine chain what has held the locket. With that she strokes the bird loving like, and sets him free.

"Birds has more sense than men. They needs no compass or stars or sun to steer by. They just know; and more'n you or me ever will. It's bad luck to kill a bird."

His face darkened, but soon cleared with a smile that was almost tender.

"Now, take that young stork. Would you opine he'd know the ways of the air? Yet he did, sir. For a bit he goes poking around the terrace same as usual. Next, he kind of struts and begins to swell up like a game-cock itching for a fight. Then up goes his skinny neck with his head to one side, as if listening for something; and he starts flapping his wings, as if to take the stiffness out of them. And presently with a croak he runs hop, hop, hop, across the tiles, his wings spread wide, clears the railing, and is gone."

"And the girl?"

"Ah, Maryska that set him free! She lies watching him go. She—but how should I know? She was eighteen and all heart. She had saved him and nursed him and fed him. She loved him enough to set him free. And so she is left alone! 'Tis the way of birds, and of men—but not of all men."

There was a long silence.

"They fly far, do storks, for all their ungainliness, and strangely. 'Tain't beauty that travels farthest. Among the Dutch the stork is an honored bird. When the children cry for a brother, their mother says:

"'Pray to the stork!'"

"And he brings one?"

"You are married, and should know," he replied gruffly.

He smoked on broodingly.

III

"STORKS fly far, you were saying," I reminded Benny.

"Aye, thousands of miles—up the Nile to Nyanza; along the coasts to the Zambezi or Niger; and to places unknown to man. So says Darnley."

"Ah!"

"The tale is his. And Darnley, wild lad though he was, told no lies—leastways, to none but himself." Red Benny eyed me doubtfully. "But you'll not believe. They never do."

"Try me!" I encouraged him. "I believe in your stork—in all storks!"

"You do?" he smiled almost wistfully.

"You're lucky. Darnley did not. And why? Firstly, I 'xpect, 'cause he was born amongst 'em, so to speak. Yes, sir, he was born in a town as Dutch as his mother, though of a Scotch father. As for him—"

He broke off with flashing eyes, leaving the sentence unfinished.

"In a garret, with storks fairly bursting through on him, was Darnley born, an only child. Storks—there was many of them, the roofs were fair alive with 'em—and he hates them; hates the look of them, and the sound. A silly hatred?"

Benny seemed to lose control of himself.

"They was like his father, wandering off and never returning to the same nest. Leastways, I have Darnley's word on it. He hated 'em as I hates a moray. Be glad you haven't one o' them slippery devils on your hook, sir."

The feel of my line augured nothing more threatening than the tide.

"Now one day a young stork falls helpless at Darnley's feet, same as at Maryska's. Does he spare it? Not he! He kicks—aye, he kills it.

"He was a full-grown lad by then, having sailed in English bottoms all seas from Riga to Triest; a quiet, gloomy lad, though hot within; and with decent habits. He had had his fights, and had won most of them, being big and spry; but he was no bully, was Darnley. And now, in a rage, he kills, tramples a weak bird; and shame settles upon him. It seems a little thing to do away with a bird, and so Darnley would have it; but, for all that, it becomes a dragging weight to him. That bit of rumpled feathers clings to his feet like pitch. He would stumble over it by dark. It haunted him. Aye, but he was a fool! He was ashamed, but set blind to his shame. There was no repentance in him. He takes to drink like other fools before him."

With this Red Benny drew the pipe from his mouth and proceeded to inhale great breaths of fresh air with relish.

"The fool!" he snarled. "And folks shuns him," he went on after a pause.

"The curse of the bird, he fancies; but it was his bloodshot eyes and his lurch and his surly tongue, I'm thinking. A man, set in his folly, is like a cuttlefish under a rock. Ye cannot get him out short of killing him and fouling the water and yourself. Leastways, most folks can't. Your cautious ones leave him alone. They was all cautious with Darnley them days. Even the lightest girls wouldn't notice him, or they'd mock him, till he comes to hate all creatures, himself most of all.

"Then his mother dies. He had loved her in a way, with much scorn for her weakness, but as much pity. He had given

her most of his earnings. He buries her decently and ships south, to Africa, to escape the storks, knowing little of their ways at that time. Down there he bides long—so long that he learns the smell of every bight of them coasts from Sierra Leone to Zanzibar. Being a strong man and a hard one, the drink does not get him, nor the fevers, nor, somehow, the madness in his heart. For it blazes up, now and again, when he sees a stork; but not one comes close enough for a kill.

"Comes a time when a longing for the north grips him. August finds him staggering about Liverpool. No sooner there than he wishes himself below the line. Aye, but he was a discontented wanderer! The devil's whip is never idle.

"There was an expedition on foot, folks after butterflies, beetles, and the like, bound for the Niger delta and then down the coast as far as the Congo. They want hands with knowledge of them parts. The boatswain's billet is fat and easy; and Darnley, one sober day, snaps it up.

"The ship—I'll waste no words on her. The *Kiama* was iron junk, a steam-roller, dear at the price, and officered by third-raters. Them bugologists may know a cockroach from a centipede, but all brass buttons looks alike to them. They takes 'em for medals, I'm thinking, and opines the more buttons, the smarter the man what sports them.

"But there was one man aboard—Stephen Strang, a man by the looks of him, and straight through to the chine. He wasn't particularly sizable, but he makes taller chaps look small. His hands might ha' been as smooth as yours; but there was a sure enough grip in them, none truer on an oar or in a—but I'm coming to that. His hair grew black and fierce, if ye know what I mean; and his eyes, they got a hold on you. They could make you laugh or work like ten, or sweat like the fear of death, once he had his mind on it. He was only a surgeon, was Stephen Strang, and I never did cotton to the run of sawbones; nor did Darnley, for that matter."

Red Benny stopped abruptly, cleared his throat, and added:

"Dr. Strang and Darnley! Dr. Strang and Darnley! It's a strange world."

Again he paused, but this time once more to refill his pipe, and more deliberately than before, if possible.

"Touching at Freetown, the *Kiama*

clears in a greasy calm—a bad sign. Down goes the glass, and a day later she is wallowing in as nasty a hurricane as a stanch ship could hope to weather. 'Tis a miracle the engines holds out as long as they do. As it is, they outlives their use. The captain—but I'll say no ill of the dead.

"As the ship swings east along the Ivory Coast, her screw is wrenched off. They have sense enough to draw her fires. Then things happen fast and plenty. The *Kiama* is whisked inland on combers longer and higher than that island; lifted up and brought down smash on a reef, bow on, but with her back nigh broken, and likely to split with the next sea.

"It was madness to launch a boat, but most of 'em was crazy by then—bugologists, brass buttons, and all. They makes a try, aye, three separate boat-loads of them. It was the last of them; but Dr. Strang—the coolness of him!

"'Darnley!' he yells, fearless-looking, like he was fishing in this here dingey. 'Darnley,' says he, with his mouth to Darnley's ear, 'do we chance it out there, or stay here comfortable and dry till morning?'

"Darnley, he grins and makes signs allowing it suits him to remain. Dry? With the water threatening to swipe 'em off the bridge as they shouts! And then, so help me, if a wave don't seize Darnley and pitch him down on the deck below, knocking the wits clean out of him. When he comes to, he finds himself not in the bad place, as he allows he will, but in the captain's bunk, being tended like a baby.

"'Don't mention it,' says the doctor, embarrassed like. Aye, it was him that went down into the froth and carried back that good-for-nothing hulk of a Darnley. Who else could ha' done it, or would have? A man for you! What a man!"

Red Benny glared at me as if daring contradiction.

"The wind falls during the night. By dawn it is clear, with the coast a hazy streak some eight knots to north'ard; but it is another day before the seas lets up their pounding. And the *Kiama* hangs on somehow. There was no sense in it. It's a strange world, sir. And now Dr. Strang, that has watched the worst of it with a smile, as interested as a boy at the circus, grows solemn and begins to take stock. Of the living he musters six, not counting Darnley. There's two deck-hands and a

stoker; Crimps, the cabin-boy, an undersized imp that has chanced it with them, either through fear or through pluck—the last, I'm thinking, from the nose of him; also Mr. Tweedy, a pink-faced, middling-aged bugologist that fright or weak knees has glued to his cabin; and Joe, the Portuguese cook, that is found praying in a barrel, his fat having wedged him in tight. As for the rest, they've been swamped with the boats or washed overboard. Of stores and water there is plenty; but the only boat left to them is stove in.

"'Darnley,' says the doctor, 'can the life-boat be repaired in a day?'"

"Darnley allows she can, easy."

"'Very good,' says the doctor. 'Do it, then. And see that she's ready to launch to-morrow dawn.' Then he adds, cheery as a jacky on shore leave: 'Men, it's all in a lifetime. We're safe somewhere off Africa; about where I'll try to discover at noon.'

"With which and a look at Joe that sends that porpoise diving to his galley, he turns on his heel and makes for the bridge.

"Now Darnley, saved by the doctor, does he work out his thanks same as ordered, and in decency? Not he! Sailors—aye, all men for that matter—is like dogs. It takes blows as well as bones and kind treatment to win 'em from bad tricks and keep 'em won. Darnley, he opines that them two deck-hands, helped by the stoker, can be talked into doing all the work ship-shape and dependable. They agree peaceable enough, him being boatswain and the bigger man.

"This arranged, he snoops below for a look-see. Guns he finds a plenty, and ammunition and beads and brandy. This last he samples, and rolls lovingly on his tongue, and samples again. Soon storks begins to croak at him from the shadows. He throws bottles at 'em, but they only draws closer and pecks at his feet—the fool! So he sneaks whimpering on deck to get free of the filthy birds. Up there he sees another, perched on a yard of the foremast, a stork what looks him through and through. Then the sun goes green on him. He plunges below, and slinks back with a shotgun, which he raises to his shoulder. He sights it careful, growling, growling like a beast. The bird gazes mournful; then of a sudden takes wing. As Darnley goes to pull the trigger, something grips his neck. He winces and fires wide; but some feathers

fall and the stork drops to the water. Then Darnley, he turns and finds himself looking into hard eyes—the doctor's. That cools him some.

"'So that's the way you work!' says Dr. Strang. 'Ain't it enough to be a shirker? Must you be a drunkard and a thief and a murderer as well? Give me that gun.' Darnley hands it over. 'Now, my brute,' says the doctor, 'over you go after that bird. The water will do you good.'

"Darnley, he curses, and allows that the hot place will see him first.

"'Ha! It's a licking you want, then?' inquires the doctor, very polite. 'Very good! You'll get it when you're a bit more fit—after you bring back the bird, and no more hurt than it is now, mark you! Now, into the water with you; or, by Heaven—'

"Darnley went. And when he stands on deck once more, dripping and cursing, the doctor takes the stork from him, looks it over, and gives it in charge of Crimps. Then he says:

"'Are you ready, Darnley?'"

"Darnley steps up, rage in his eye, and squares.

"'Not so fast!' says the doctor. 'It's a bit hot under the sun. Peel off your shirt. I shall.'

"Which he does, showing a chest and arms that had warned a man more sober.

"'A fair fight,' says the doctor. 'Three-minute rounds to a knock-out, Queensbury rules. Mr. Tweedy, will you referee?'"

"The bugologist, he blinks a 'Yes' with his watery eyes and draws out his watch, while the others forms a ring.

"'Shake, Darnley!' says the doctor. 'Here's hoping I can knock some sense into that thick skull of yours.'

"He was no novice, was Darnley; but in the second round he measures the deck and takes the count. It is the doctor that souses him and helps him up.

"'Do we understand each other now?' says Dr. Strang.

"'We do!' says Darnley, weak, but in his right senses.

"'Then bring along the stork and help me with him—my first patient for months.'

"The stork acts so tame, as they feel it over, that the doctor looks surprised. Then, when he goes to work one of its wings, which has a few clips taken out of it, he looks more surprised still and gives a whistle.

" 'Tis no ordinary bird,' he declares; and proves it by unwinding from the wing a long chain with a locket at the end of it, a locket of gold. 'Darnley,' says he now, 'oblige me by going to my cabin and bringing back my surgical kit. Crimps 'll point out the chest to you.'

"Darnley, fair on fire with curiosity, leaves him. And when he returns, the locket ain't to be seen; but it warn't no dream, he opines, the stork being tied to a catch-all above the bunk by that same chain. Darnley, he can't keep his eyes open it.

" 'Pretty chain!' says the doctor.

"Darnley allows it's all of that.

" 'And yours by rights,' says the doctor; 'and the locket, too, for that matter. But, Darnley, might I keep it till the end of the journey?'

"Then Darnley, remembering as it was him that saved his life, barks out:

" 'Aye, sir, and to the end of all time, if ye'll take it from me!'

" 'Thanks!' says Dr. Strang; 'but only till the end of the adventure.'

"He says it so queer that Darnley looks up. A strange light is shining in the doctor's eyes—a strange light, soft but very bright, sort of boyish like.

" 'Darnley,' says he, very friendly sounding, 'would you call me a man?'

"Darnley rubs his sore chin and grins.

" 'That I would, sir!'

" 'Thank you again!' smiles the doctor. 'I've had my doubts.'

" 'You?' cries Darnley, all the shame gone out of him. 'You, sir? Why, you're a man and a half!'

"Out shoots his hand, and the doctor grips it. They are friends for life.

"Then happens a strange thing—no, it was the thing to happen!

" 'Darnley,' says the doctor, 'you've the figure and the heart of a man. Why do you make a beast of yourself?'

"Would you believe it, sir? Darnley up and tells him—aye, all from the beginning to the end, the whole miserable, sickening story of it.

" 'You poor devil,' says the doctor, very low and gentle. 'I hardly blames you. Shame is a cruel bunk-mate. It's kick him out, one must, or leave him behind. Ship him with you, a stowaway, and you lose your soul. I know, Darnley'; and his eyes gets dark.

" 'Never you, sir!' says Darnley.

" 'Yes, me! Darnley, it's not always the men what are false or the women weak; and there is many kinds of shame. The less deserved they seems to be, the harder they are to bear.' He stops and thinks a while. 'My shame, Darnley, came through a woman. She was faithless—that's all! I thought she had wrecked my life. She did, in a way—wrecked its usefulness. People pinned hope on me, as a surgeon. She—but that doesn't count any more. What counts is that I left, deserted my work; and wandered off like this—to forget. But now the worst is over for both of us, man. That stork has brought us luck.' And he smiles again. 'You didn't kill this one, Darnley. You saved it. Your reckoning is paid. The curse is off you!'

" 'You think so, sir?' begs Darnley.

" 'I'm sure of it,' says the doctor. 'And now, man, we have work ahead. We must start for land by morning.'

IV

"WHICH they did, sir, carrying the stork and as much water and provisions as they can. And they makes what they takes for land early that forenoon, but finds it an endless stretch of mud-flats covered thick with rotting mangroves and creepers. And that night they lies in the open boat fighting insects—that night and many a night to come, with seven long days of killing heat and stench, and Mr. Tweedy soon raving with fever, and the water running low.

"Into one reach after another they pulls, only to wind up in mud, sticky, sucking, bubbling black slime, tangled with black roots; and overhead dripping black branches; and everywhere black things flying and creeping. Do you see this, sir?"

With a gesture Red Benny embraced the whole lovely, radiant scene.

"Well, sir, it was everything that this is not. It would ha' driven hope out of any man but Stephen Strang.

"Then Crimps has an idea. A pert one was he!

" 'Dr. Strang,' says he, 'by your leave, I've heard tell that birds 'll point fresh water when they needs it.'

"All mocks him but the doctor.

" 'Good lad,' says he, with a smile on his blistered lips. 'We'll try it, if the stork is in shape to fly.'

"So he ties to it a long fish-line, same as yours, but fathoms on a reel, and lets the stork loose—but you'll never believe it, sir."

"Wasn't it part destiny?" I suggested; but I had the wisdom not to smile.

"Aye, and so I fancy myself at times; but the doctor is all faith, Darnley says, and, sure enough, water, clear, fresh water, they finds that very evening, and friendly natives. Mr. Tweedy's fever holds them some time; but the next day the stork is freed for good. The doctor's heart seems set on that. Seven weeks later brings them safe to Coomassie. In another three moons the doctor is in London with Darnley—"

"So Darnley stuck to him?" I interrupted.

"You couldn't ha' pried him off with the command of a dreadnought—not, leastways, till the close of the adventure. For the stork's locket holds the makings of an adventure, as Darnley learns; but where it'd end he had his doubts.

"It is early spring when they makes England. Late in the spring they lands in Trieste; and a merry spot it now seems to Darnley, not the gloomy port he remembers. There is a long trip by train. 'Tis the curse of land that one cannot cross it in ships. But toward the end of it are glimpses of water, a leaping, roaring river, enough to put the heart back into one. Not that Dr. Strang wants heart, he growing more boyish like every minute.

"Soon! Soon!" says he, almost singing it.

"It's a long chance you're taking, doctor," Darnley grunts.

"Has the stork fooled us yet?" says Strang.

"Darnley allows as it hasn't; and goes red and glum till the doctor cheers him."

Red Benny knocked the ashes from his pipe and slipped it into his pocket.

"In northern Hungary the springs are as fair and sweet as the girls." He sighed. "There are castles there as grand as at Windsor, and the ladies in them fairer than any royal princess. To-day the fields will be green and lush, and the Lady Maryska—ah, sir, but she was glorious that afternoon—all golden, even to her black eyes.

"You have come!" she says, looking Stephen Strang in the face.

"I needed you," says he simply.

"How like you!" says she. "I knew you would come."

"Darnley, he turns away. There is flowers everywhere and towers, very big and high. There was many things deserving a long look."

"And so," I ventured at last, "they came into their own."

"That they did, sir," he replied in a subdued voice; "and rich it was, and according to their due. And now, when she romps about with her—"

"She was cured, fully?"

He seemed indignant.

"And why not, sir? The doctor was there. And none smarter, as you should know, him being famous through the world now. But it was not that only. He was stronger than most men, was he; and yet gentler than a woman, and full of faith and love and patience. Now I ask you, sir, could anything withstand all these?"

"You are right," I said. "Nothing could." A minute passed. "But what of Darnley? Did he stay on with them?"

"Close on to two years," said Benny, "and was godfather to the younger Stephen. But he was a wanderer, was Darnley, and a sailor. The sea is the home for a sailor, or a spot that smells of it. He wanders till the age of wandering is past; and then he anchors where there is blue sea and much sun and the air is strong and clean. And in that way he kind of remains near those two in Hungary."

"There is something in that."

"Everything, sir," said Red Benny, closing his eyes.

"But the message in the locket? Did Darnley never tell you? Or did he never see it?"

His eyes opened, and with a new look.

"I think I can trust you," he said, having seemed to search my soul. "Read it yourself."

He laid in my hand, with unaffected reverence, a locket of gold brightly enameled with the initials "M. S." The four-leaf clover was still there, and a scrap of paper stained with age. These were the English words inscribed on it:

Only a bird, he'll help thee if he can;
If so, come help me, if thou art a *man*!

And in one corner:

Castle Szobrancz, Hungary.

"But how—" I began.

"That is simple, sir. I am Benjamin Darnley."

I caught no fish that day.

We sailed home under the spell of a friendly silence. It was Red Benny who broke it.

"You have children, haven't you, sir?"

"One, Darnley, only one, a little girl."

"Does she believe in the stork, sir?"

"Why, yes!"

"Then, begging your pardon, have a care that she doesn't lose faith in it!"

DANIEL WILLARD OF THE B. AND O.

BY EDWARD HUNGERFORD



It is an old railroad, a very old railroad, the very oldest of all our railroads, if you please. And yet the railroaders all the way across the land have formed a habit of speaking of Baltimore and Ohio as the road of the young men. They will tell you of the remarkable work that has been accomplished within the past dozen years in the complete rebuilding of this historic overland carrier—the millions upon millions of dollars that have been expended in straightening its lines and reducing its grades, in supplying it with adequate terminals and equipment of every sort. Then they will tell you of the renaissance of its personnel.

"It is the road of the young men," they will repeat, and they will tell you of Jones here and Brown there—dozens of Joneses and hundreds of Browns—all coming quickly to executive positions of trust and of responsibility. They will make a specific instance and tell you of Thompson, the general manager of the line; at thirty-nine master of the operation of four thousand miles of fairly difficult railroad. And then they will tell you of Daniel Willard, the president.

For a railroad that is old in years, but young in spirit, in hope, and in ambition, must have at the very top a man who is young in spirit, in hope, and in ambition. Daniel Willard is such a man. The youth and the energy that he has expended in the rebuilding of Baltimore and Ohio has been reflected, not only in his great success in assuming a real command of that im-

portant property, but quite as much in the fact that he has been made front and head of the group of railroad executives east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio who have taken upon their shoulders the difficult task of raising their freight rates five per cent.

At the time when this is being written the ultimate success of that campaign is not known. But if the railroads succeed in this move, the most important that they have undertaken during the past decade, by far the largest part of the credit of the first important victory that the carriers will have won before the powerful Interstate Commerce Commission must go to the indomitable perseverance and the alert resourcefulness of Mr. Willard.

He is a big man, this general among railroad presidents, and if you doubt his bigness, all you have to do is to take a trip out over the Baltimore and Ohio and keep your eyes open most of the way. Perhaps you have only known of the Baltimore and Ohio of other days—days when the B. and O. and the Erie were alike the favorite butts of minstrel jokes; although to-day they have both become among the best operated of all the Eastern trunk lines. Perhaps you remember the sad plight of Baltimore and Ohio no more than twenty years ago—its strings of unpainted cars, the tragic hours when outgoing trains had to be held in Camden Station, Baltimore, until incoming ones could bring in lamps and drinking-glasses for the cars. If so, a transformation awaits you.

When you leave the road's present eastern terminal—Philadelphia—you will see mile after mile of track as perfect as the best that the Lake Shore might boast, stations and station-yards as immaculate as the Lackawanna's. And if you lift your head contemptuously at all of this and remind us that the real test of a railroad lies, not in passenger perfection, but in its ability to haul freight rapidly and at low cost, take a further look.

See the new classification and transfer yards at Brunswick, just below historic Harper's Ferry, and then know this is one of the largest railroad yards in the world. Go to your bankers and ask them about the B. and O. They will tell you how real management, executive ability of a sort all too rarely found in American railroading, has by careful inquiry into train-loading and despatching conditions doubled and almost tripled the average train-load. Without such keen economical and efficient methods it is doubtful if Baltimore and Ohio could have weathered the vast and disastrous floods throughout Ohio in March, 1913, and the \$55,000,000 of additional debt burden that has been placed upon its financial back.

If you will look again from the car window after you are an hour or two to the west of Harper's Ferry, you will see the Magnolia cut-off—where six miles of main line are being eliminated at the cost of considerably more than a million dollars a mile. But the interest on a good deal more than six million dollars will be saved in operating cost—in the reduction of grades and the shortening of the line.

If you are still awake when you are west of Cumberland, you will see more of the railroad reconstruction which the engineers delight in calling "heavy work," and you will begin the more to realize that Daniel Willard is putting his transportation house in first-rate order. He speaks of it modestly himself, although in his heart of hearts he must be surpassing proud of every mile of the new B. and O.

"We had to have relief," he tells you in his quiet, earnest way. "Between Cumberland and Martinsburg—some fifty-seven miles, all told—is the funnel of our traffic. The lines to the east and the lines to the west pour traffic in at either end of it. Over each of those fifty-seven miles we pull more than twenty million tons of freight each year. It is one of the busiest

railroad stretches in the world, and that is why we had to build the Magnolia cut-off. In a short time we shall have to use four tracks through this funnel and keep them busy every hour of the day."

The regeneration of the Baltimore and Ohio was begun before Willard's day—he is the first to make that unmistakably clear to you. Yet it is he who has steadily carried it forward, although in an era when railroad credit has been lean and constructive measures constantly increasing in cost. And then remember that regeneration on the B. and O. is not entirely a matter of cuts and fills and tunnels, new main tracks and sidings by the hundreds of miles, new bridges and stations, cars and locomotives—not even entirely a matter of revision of operating systems—it has extended to the rank and file of the employees of the system.

Willard is too big a man not to realize that, after all, the human element is the really big element in railroading. One of the notable recent events in the railroad world was a conference of B. and O. men that he called at Deer Park, Maryland, a comfortable resort quite central to the entire system.

To this conference came B. and O. men big and little. They came with facts, suggestions, even criticisms. And after three or four days of close and intimate session with their president they returned, inspired with an enthusiasm that has not yet ceased to permeate the entire system.

Dan Willard likes to be close to his men. It is one of his fine executive strengths. And to that particular strength he brings the aid of a particularly retentive memory.

When he goes out upon the line on one of his constant inspection journeys, he brings himself close to the men who are working shoulder to shoulder with him. He likes to meet them, to know them by name—and to remember them. He will meet young Smith, who is a division engineer at Zanesville, or Jones, who bears the title of trainmaster down in southern Illinois—that district referred to by certain contemptuous Missouri newspapers as "Egypt." He likes to meet Smith, and he likes to meet Jones, and Smith and Jones certainly like to meet Daniel Willard. There is a genuineness in the man that makes keen appeal to his coworkers.

But let not Jones or Smith translate their president's cordiality into any false

belief that they have acquired any inner prestige with him. To gain a prestige with the president of the Baltimore and Ohio means a record that can be translated into dollars and cents, or a perceptible betterment of the main relation between the road and its employees. For a year later Daniel Willard may be sitting in his big office in Baltimore running his skilled eyes over the income and the outgo of his property, and may chance to come upon the record of one of the central Ohio divisions.

"Let's see," he may say to his chief clerk. "That's where young Jones is holding down the division engineer's job. His expenses are running pretty high this year. Now that year when the floods came down the Muskingum and took our bridge we expected to spend money, but here we are forty thousand dollars ahead of that unlucky year."

The chief clerk is not certain as to the figures. Daniel Willard is certain. The chief clerk brings the record of twenty-four months before. Daniel Willard is right. His memory rarely fails him. And so, when he sees Smith's car-mile cost going up, there is going to be an explanation demanded from the young trainmaster down in southern Illinois, and perfunctory excuses do not go with the man back at Baltimore. The men who work on the B. and O. have already come to know that.

Of course, the case of Jones and the case of Smith are purely supposititious, but I might cite many cases that are not supposititious. It is a matter of record on the Burlington that when Willard came to that road as operating vice-president the men hated him. They had heard tales of him as a hard driver. But when he left, six years later, they loved him.

Not that he had failed to live up to the reputation that had preceded him. It is said that of the division superintendents who were on that road when he arrived but two had survived—and one of these was a man with a wooden leg, who had a life contract with the system by reason of the injury he had sustained in its service.

Remember that Mr. Willard understands men, railroad men in particular. And the railroad men of the Burlington are not different from railroad men anywhere in the fact that they like best of all the executive who is just. Some men can be gracious, and some are generous; it

takes a pretty fine caliber of mentality for a man to maintain a sense of absolute justice toward his fellows, particularly those who are dependent upon him. To combine such justice with democracy—there you have the making of a real president, of a railroad or of any other large enterprise, social or commercial. Such a combination is the rare possession of Daniel Willard.

He is democratic, because, like so many others in this new order of railroad executives, he has come all the way up the long and treacherous railroad ladder, asking little aid of any one. At eighteen he hired out as a track laborer on the lines of the old Central Vermont, near the little village of Windsor, from which he came. If you go up to Windsor to-day you will be sure to find some oldest inhabitant whose memory easily bridges thirty-five years, and he will be sure to tell you how he predicted at that time that the railroad world would yet hear from Dan Willard.

The railroad world has heard from Dan Willard. To-day he is Windsor's most famous son, and the men of the Soo line, the Burlington, and the Erie have a sort of pleasant way of referring to him as a graduate of those efficient properties. And there are some of the Lake Shore veterans who can tell you that they remember how Daniel Willard, come to be one of the chief figures in the railroad world, fired an engine on that famous line. They will smile pleasantly as they say it, and then add:

"You know that Mr. Willard has always been one of us."

That is the distinguishing trait of the president of the Baltimore and Ohio—his simplicity. He is a plain man; and if he gloried in anything, he might glory in that. And yet a man who knows a deal about art dined with him of an evening in a great metropolitan club and was a bit surprised after dinner to walk around the gallery of the club and hear the railroader not only comment intelligently upon each of the pictures, but also tell much of the life and personality of the men who had painted them.

Perhaps this man did not know that Willard all his life has been a tremendous reader. When he was fireman, and when he was engineer, he used to carry books on the engine with him, and that is the way he acquired a large amount of his education. To-day he rarely stops long in any town

without going to a book-store and gathering up a large bunch of volumes to read—in his nervous, thorough way. When Louis D. Brandeis, of Boston, sprang his scientific management ideas upon the railroads, Willard proceeded to buy every book that had been written on the subject, and then to read one after another as fast as he could devour them. Perhaps the results of some of them are the Magnolia cut-off and the B. and O.'s splendidly practical methods of train-loading.

Willard's mind is open to all manner of new schemes. He is nervous, sensitive, intense, direct. And he bears the reputation of having as fine a conscience as any man in the railroad world. Possibly that is one of the reasons that the big railroads of the northeastern region of the United States called him to be their Moses in their desperate battle for an increase in their freight rates. Yet when you ask him the methods by which he brought the Baltimore and Ohio back to a place among the leading high-grade railroads of the land

he seems at a loss for a direct answer. There are so many answers that might be given. You take a direct trend.

"What is your way of handling your men?" you ask.

He does not hesitate this time.

"By letting them understand my plans and work with me in their development," is his reply.

There is another quality of success in a real executive. Now you understand why Mr. Willard planned the Deer Park meeting—the whys of so many of his unusual plans. His subordinates are not subordinates, but partners; all the way up from the man who is helping to keep the track in order to the vice-president who can boast a private car to carry him out over the lines when their business demands it. They all understand his plans. They understand him. No one works in mental darkness on the B. and O. And it must be largely because of this very thing that the historic old road has emerged at last into the full sunshine of prosperity.

A ROAD SONG

"WHERE are you going?" he said.

"Where are *you* going?" said I.

Then he cried: "Where the dawn throws red

And silver over the sky;

Somewhere the boughs are swinging,

Somewhere a thrush is singing,

Somewhere the winds are winging

O'er places wide and high."

And I shouted: "So am I!"

"Of what are you dreaming?" he said.

"Of what are *you* dreaming?" said I.

He replied: "Of camp-fires red

And a roof of starry sky;

Of waking to find that the singing

In boughs above me swinging

Is not a dream; of springing

To catch winds laughing by."

And I shouted: "So am I!"

"What are you leaving?" he said.

"What are *you* leaving?" said I.

And he told me: "The things that are dead

When we get out to the sky;

The false gods and their grinning,

The threads Fate twisted spinning,

And all but the beginning

In places wide and high."

And I shouted: "So am I!"

Glenn Ward Dresbach

A MATRIMONIAL MISHAP

BY E. K. MEANS

WHUT you settin' 'round suckin' dat pipe fer? Git out an' clean up de yard wid de rake!"

Lunie addressed her remarks to a lean-faced, gray-haired darky as she emptied a skillet at the feet of a hound-dog.

"Dis yard don't need no clarin' up. I favors lettin' de wind blow de trash away."

"But we gwine have comp'ny," Lunie protested, flourishing the greasy skillet. "Ain't you got no fambly pride?"

Old Buckeye did not answer. He gazed out across the cow-lot, pondered deeply on nihilism, and spat over the rickety railing of the cabin porch. Then, observing from the tail of his eye that Lunie was "windin' up" her skillet hand about as a baseball pitcher winds up to throw a ball, he inquired meekly:

"Whut's all dis I hear 'bout us gittin' married? Ain't us lived togedder fer thirteneen years?"

"Sho' we is," Lunie agreed. "But Elder Vinegar Atts say dat niggers oughter git married same as white folks, an' I agrees wid him."

"Huh!" Buckeye snorted. "Monkey see, monkey do! Whenever niggers acks like white folks' foolishness, dey gits eve'y-thing in a gorm."

"Tain't so," Lunie snapped. "Us kin git married as good as white folks, an' dat's whut we's gwine do dis very night."

"I ain't gwine mess wid it, Lunie," Buckeye declared positively. "Ef you wants to make a fool outen me, don't ax me to he'p. Git dem 'leben chillun of ourn an' pitch in!"

Buckeye arose and walked away from the cabin. He had nowhere to go and nothing to do. The hound-dog, having devoured his food, followed him to the cow-lot, where both sat down under a china-berry tree and found peace.

"I 'speck you leads a dawg's life, Tige," Buckeye remarked to the hound; "but you better be glad you ain't a ole nigger man!"

With the field cleared for action, Lunie got busy.

"Come here, you little debbils!" she bawled.

Eleven children promptly recognized their personal description and came trooping from under the cabin, which was set upon a high foundation, affording a dry, cool playground underneath. They presented an amusing assortment of sizes and sexes, and every shade of color from coal black like their father to a brownish crimson like their mother.

"Git in line! Git in line!" Lunie commanded, as she waved them ahead of her across the yard. "March up to de big house!"

The giggling children, marshaled by their mother, stopped at last in the rear of one of the largest houses in Tickfall, their own cabin being situated in the pasture behind it. The residence was closed, the occupants being away from home.

Producing a key from the voluminous pocket in her dress, Lunie opened the kitchen door, and the children trooped in. They were familiar with this part of the house, for Lunie was the cook here.

"Git still!" Lunie howled. "Listen to me. Me an' yo' pap is gwine give a party an' git married dis very night. Ole Marse Hinry Drake an' Miss Jinny is gone to de Mardi Gras in N' Awleens, an' I's gwine borry some fixin's to fix up my cabin. Come in here now an' git ready to tote!"

She led the way to the drawing-room, where the costliest of Irish point lace curtains adorned the large plate-glass windows. Picking up one of her little boys, Lunie set him upon her broad, fat shoulder, and with many loud grunts mounted a chair and held him up.

"Reach up, honey," she said, "an' lif' down dem two curtain-poles."

Wrapping the curtains around the poles, as she had seen her husband wrap his fish-seine around the handles, she handed one pole to each of the older children.

Next she went to the bedroom reserved for distinguished guests. Pillows, covered with hand-embroidered pillow-slips of silk and lace, went into the fat arms of the smaller children. An eider-down quilt of flowered silk was rolled up in a bundle and thrust into the arms of one of the larger girls. A bedspread of Cluny lace Lunie tossed carelessly over her own fat shoulders, then gathered into her strong arms a mantel clock of ivory, marble, and gold.

Thus burdened, she moved into the dining-room. Here only one thing took her fancy—a cut-glass punch-bowl of beautiful design, as large as half of a whisky-barrel, and six dozen handsome glasses.

Setting the clock down upon the dining-table, she lifted the bowl and glasses and placed them beside it.

"Hinry," she ordered, "git dat wheelbarrer down at de barn, an' trundle dis here clock an' dis bowl an' glasses down to de cabin. Hurry now!"

When the wheelbarrow arrived and was laden, Lunie shooed all the children out of the kitchen, locked the door, and commanded:

"All you little niggers foller me wid yo' tote!"

Once back in the cabin, she inspected her trophies.

"Buckeye ain't botherin' 'bout dis here weddin'," she soliloquized; "but I bet dat booze-bowl will int'ruse his mind!"

Going to the door, she shaded her eyes from the evening sun just sinking toward the horizon, and looked toward the china-berry tree in the middle of the cow-lot.

"Buckeye!" she bawled. "Come here!"

Buckeye waited a sufficient time to demonstrate to his own satisfaction that he was not subject to his wife's beck and call; then he arose slowly and proceeded with even greater deliberation toward the cabin. But he had not gone far before curiosity quickened his steps, for Lunie stood on the porch holding a gallon jug.

"Buckeye," she said ingratiatingly, "I done borrowed ole miss's punch-bowl fer de weddin', an' we need some booze to go in

it. Take dis jug an' dis two dollars, and go 'cross de bayou an' buy us some dram."

"Yes'm!" Buckeye spoke with alacrity, seized the jug and the money, and struck a rapid gait toward the bayou.

"Seliny," Lunie said to the oldest girl, as Buckeye walked away, "you go down to all de cabins in dis nigger bottom an' invite 'em to yo' paw's weddin'. Tell 'em no niggers ain't allowed to come whut ain't got on socks!"

"Mammy," one of the children asked, "gimme dis nice new yellor stick?"

He held up a rod, covered with brown paper, about three feet long, with a fuse on the end.

"Hey, dar," Lunie howled, "whar did you find dat Romer candle? Little Jimmy Drake gimme dat Romer candle las' Chris'mus. It's a twenty-shooter, an' I been savin' it fer dis here weddin'. It gits shot off to-night, de las' thing!"

Snatching the Roman candle from the child's hands, Lunie carried it into the kitchen and set it on a shelf behind the cook-stove.

"Git under de house, you chilluns!" she ordered. "I got to straighten up dis cabin fer comp'ny."

II

BUCKEYEW knew Lunie too well to interpose any vocal-objections to the wedding, but he determined to prevent her matrimonial designs, if possible.

"Lawd!" he sighed, as he walked with the jug toward the bayou. "I'd ruther be in de jail-house!"

Then he stopped dead still and set his jug on a stump. Buckeye was not a heavy thinker; all his ideas were elemental. But that was a good idea—why not get in prison and wait for Lunie's whim to subside? After he had spent fifteen or twenty days in jail, Lunie would have some other fancy, and he would be safe from matrimony.

A few years before, when Lunie, in a fit of anger, had run him away from home, he had gone on a drunken spree and landed in jail for four months. In this way he had been provided with three meals and a warm shelter through the winter; and when spring opened, a planter who needed work-hands had secured the release of all the negroes in the jail and set them to work on his plantation.

"Huh!" Buckeye exulted. "Gittin' in jail is de easies' wuck a nigger does!"

Hiding his jug under some vines close to an oak-tree, so that he would remember where he had hidden it, Buck looked out upon the world with the eye of a malefactor.

"Wonder whut I better do?" he asked himself.

Walking down the crooked street of the negro settlement known as Shiny, he saw some white woman's washing hanging on a line in the rear of a negro cabin.

"Dis is whar I gits in jail," Buck said.

Climbing the fence, he snatched an armload of clothes off the line, tied them up in a bundle, and waited for the noise that would indicate that he was detected. But not a sound did he hear.

Picking up the bundle, he tossed it over the fence into the street, climbed over, and went singing down the street, carrying his bundle in a most conspicuous position. Still no voice was raised in protestation.

At last a little child ran out of a neighboring cabin and came up the street toward him. Buckeye took hope; but the child was merely curious and brought no threatening message.

"Whose clothes am dese I done swiped?" Buckeye inquired.

"Dunno, suh."

"Is dis yo' mammy's washin'?"

"Naw, suh. Dat's Mary Ann's, an' she ain't home."

With a snort of disgust Buckeye carried the clothes back to the yard and tossed them over the fence.

"I might 'a' knowed niggers don't watch nothin', don't never take keer of nothin'. I's gwine whar de white folks is at."

Walking up the street of Tickfall, Buckeye passed the Gaitskill store. Dodging down the alley, he entered the side door. Whistling loudly, to be sure of attracting attention, he walked to where a large number of hams hung on hooks along a rack, selected one of the largest and best, and turned and walked up the aisle of the store.

"Good ebenin', Marse Tom," he said, greeting Colonel Gaitskill.

"Howdy, Buck!" Gaitskill hardly gave him a glance.

"Hello, old nigger man!" one of the clerks called to him. "All them piccaninies in that cabin are going to be glad to see that ham!"

"Dey shore is!" Buckeye laughed.

Passing out of the door, unmolested, Buck met Sheriff Flournoy.

"Hello, Buck!" the sheriff said, and looked across the street, concentrating his attention on a pretty woman carrying a dog.

Buckeye's heart filled with wonder at his immunity from arrest.

"Whut ails dese white folks? I reckon I'll have to do somepin to make 'em real mad."

Adjoining the Tickfall post-office was a physician's office, the front door containing an ornamental glass bearing the doctor's name. Using his stolen ham like a club, Buckeye let out a whoop and smashed the glass door.

A young horse hitched in front of the doctor's office broke the bridle, galloped down the street, turned the corner, hung the hind wheel of the buggy on a telephone-pole, and tore it off.

"Dar now!" Buckeye shivered, showing the whites of his eyes. "Dis is whar dis here nigger is gone an' went an' overdid it!"

Mr. Huff, the town constable, stepped out of the post-office.

"Come along here, nigger!" he said briefly.

"Yes, suh, white folks, comin'!" Buck said.

A crowd gathered. A negro boy came up the street, leading the trembling horse, the buggy dragging behind with its broken wheel. Then there happened something which every Southerner has seen a thousand times.

The physician whose door was shattered, and the young farmer who owned the horse and buggy, elbowed their way through the crowd.

"Hold on, Huff!" the young farmer cried. "I don't like to see this old nigger get in jail. When the Dorfoche Bayou was four miles wide in the June rise last year, and my wife was about to die, this old nigger waded and swam that bayou to go after a doctor for me."

"That's right, Huff," the physician spoke up. "And you remember when my little girl was thrown off her pony and her arm broken? This old nigger picked her up out of the mud and carried her home."

Mr. Huff smiled. His duty lay clear before him. When white men plead a negro's cause, the law is a dead letter and the temples of justice tumble down.

"What's the matter with you, Buck?" Huff asked gruffly.

"Dunno, boss. Feelin' good, I reckon."

"Trot along home now with that ham," Huff said. "Get off the street. Hear me?"

The negro moved off with expedition; the crowd grinned, made a few facetious remarks, and dispersed.

"How come de white folks don't want to put me in de jail-house?" Buckeye pondered. He thrust his hand into his pocket. Two silver dollars rattled together merrily. "Dar now!" he exclaimed, his face illumined by the light of a great discovery. "Two dollars in dis pocket! Wid two dollars no nigger cain't never git in jail. Dis here loose change is gotter be spent fust!"

Hastening back to Shiny, he picked up his jug, hid his stolen ham under the vines near the oak-tree where the jug had been, and moved rapidly through the gathering dusk toward the Hen Scratch Saloon.

III

"SKEETER," Buckeye said to the bar-keeper of the Hen Scratch Saloon, "my ole woman is done gone crazy agin, an' I axes you, please, suh, to fill up dis jug wid two dollars' wuth of dram."

"Whut ails de ole woman?" Skeeter Butts inquired politely.

"She's got her mind sot on gittin' married," Buckeye informed him in tragic tones.

"How come she is pestered 'bout a little thing like dat?" Skeeter wanted to know.

"Dunno," Buckeye answered in perplexity. "We's got 'leben chillun. We been livin' togedder thirteen year, hand runnin', an' now she gone an' got notions in her haid."

"Dem onlucky numbers you's namin', Buck," Skeeter informed him. "Dem 'leben chillun an' you an' de ole woman makes thirteen; an' you done been married thirteen year. Thirteen 'll git you!"

Skeeter set the gallon jug of raw, "nigger" whisky on the top of the bar and wiped his hands on a rag. Buckeye set his two dollars on the bar beside the jug.

"Up to dis time, Skeeter," he said, "I's had good luck; but dis is all de money I's got. Bad luck ketches a nigger as soon as his pockets is empty, an' dat thirteen is a shore, certain sign."

At that moment the swinging door of the saloon was hurled open and a breathless, barefoot negro boy ran across the room with bulging eyeballs.

"Buckeye!" he panted. "Pap say—pap say—run! De cornstable is comin'! Run!"

"How come?" Buckeye demanded, reaching for his jug. "Whut is I done?"

"Steal a ham!" the boy panted. "Pap say run!"

Buckeye sighed, moved toward the rear door of the saloon, and out on the street ran at full speed for two blocks. Then he turned a corner and stopped dead still. One hundred yards away a crowd of negroes was gathered around a battered buggy, in which a young farmer sat. Buckeye recognized the horse, the buggy with the new wheel, and the owner thereof.

Then from the cabin before which he stood a voice spoke, the speaker invisible:

"Run, Buckeye! Run for yo' life! Dat man down dar in dat buggy is huntin' you wid a gun. He say he done made a mis-cue 'bout you bein' de nigger whut waded the bayou an' saved his wife. He say all niggers looks alike to him. Run!"

"Bless gracious!" Buckeye sighed. "I knowed I never had heerd tell of dat man's wife, but—"

He whirled around the corner and ran at marvelous speed; but alas, luck was against him! He ran straight toward the cabin where, earlier in the afternoon, he had disturbed a colored lady's washing. She met him in the middle of the street, waving her arms and screeching like a locomotive whistle:

"Here he am! Dat him! Sen' fer Huff!"

Buckeye paused just long enough to shift his jug from one hand to the other; then he made a typical negro getaway. He did not run; it cannot be said that he walked. He merely ceased, almost imperceptibly, to be in the place where he had been.

He went toward his own house, just as a fox goes toward its den when pursued by the dogs; but with the animal cunning of his race he paused to reconnoiter before he entered his den. Stopping on the corner, he gave himself up to deep thought.

"Thuty days fer stealin' dat warsh, thuty days fer swipin' dat ham, thuty days fer bustin' dat buggy—how many days in de jail-house do dat make?"

A little mulatto girl came running down the road with the giggles, her eyes shining with excitement.

"Mr. Buckeye," she said in a shrill fal-

setto, "de white folks done been down at you' cabin a huntin' fer you. Doc Mose-ly, he wus de las' one. He say you done bus' his glass do' all to smashereens wid a ham!"

"Oh, Lawdy," Buck mourned, "dat's thuty days mo'! How many days do dat add up?" The little girl stood looking at him curiously while he pondered the problem. Then he asked: "Sissy, does you go to school?"

"Yes, suh."

"Does you l'arn figgers?"

"Yes, suh."

"Sissy, how many do thuty an' thuty an' thuty an' thuty be?"

"Seben hunderd," the child answered promptly.

Buckeye groaned, and leaned heavily against the fence.

Down in the "nigger bottom" at the foot of the hill he could hear songs and laughter coming from his own house. The guests had assembled for the wedding.

"Sissy," he asked the little yellow girl, who still lingered, "is de white folks all plum' gone?"

"Yes, suh, dey's went."

"Dat's all right," Buckeye said. "Ef dey axes you whar me, tell 'em I'm gone to de railroad to ketch de train fer Arkansas."

Then he walked straight toward his cabin.

"I's safe fer a little while," he reasoned. "White folks don't 'speckt no nigger to be whar Jey jes' done been lookin' fer him."

IV

"De way to decorate a house fer a weddin' is to hide de inside wid nice fix-in's," Lunie announced to her guests, as they walked through the four-room house and admired the lace curtains, the silk spreads, and all the other borrowed splendor. "Ole miss say to me befo' she went to de Mardi Gras: 'Lunie, I cain't be at yo'-all's weddin', but I favors it, an' you kin have whatever I got to fix up yo' home nice'; an' so I went to de big house an' he'ped myself."

"De white folks shore is good to you," the Rev. Vinegar Atts boomed, as he stood in the middle of the floor and sorrowfully surveyed the empty cut-glass punch-bowl.

"You needn't look so lonesome an' hongry at dat booze-bowl, elder. I done sount Buckeye fer some dram to fill it."

"Dar now!" Mr. Atts exclaimed in high approval. "Nothin' ain't fergotted or overlooked at dis here weddin'. Dis is shore a suspicious occasion."

At that moment Buckeye stood in the doorway of the dining-room, holding his battered hat in one hand, his jug in the other.

"Here me, Lunie!" he announced. "I brung de booze an' I never tuck a drap. I ain't really had time."

"Good ebenin', my beloved brudder," Vinegar Atts boomed at the sight of the man with the jug. "How is yo' good heal' dis ebenin'?"

Buckeye backed away. He and his family were comparative newcomers in Tick-fall, and he was not acquainted with the pastor of the Shoofly congregation.

"I's de Revun' Vinegar Atts," the parson explained.

"Dat's right," Buckeye smiled, tossing aside his hat and extending his hand. "I's glad to acquaint myse'f wid you. I knowed you wus a religion man soon as I sot eyes on you. Come an' he'p me git dis dram in dis paunch-bowl."

"De white folks is huntin' you, Buckeye," Lunie said, as she stood by watching the preparation of the punch. "De corn-stable an' a white man wid a busted buggy an' a feller from de Gaitskill ration-house an' Doc Mosey."

"Yes'm," Buckeye answered importantly. "I done seed 'em all, excusin' Doc Mosey, an' I knows whut he wants. Dat's whut kep me so long—I'se so populous wid de white folks."

From the moment the punch was ready for the guests the fun and hilarity became an uproar. Elder Vinegar Atts and Buckeye, having the first dip at the bowl, led the fun. It soon became necessary for the preacher and the bridegroom to go into the parlor and sit down.

"Elder," Buckeye began, when they were seated, "wus you ever in de late on-pleasantness?"

"Late which?" Atts inquired.

"Wus you fit, bled, an' died endurin' of de war?"

"Naw, suh. I was a infant in arms den," Atts said.

"Huh! Not me!" Buckeye boasted. "I wus a regimint in arms." Buckeye looked up lovingly at a double-barreled, muzzle-loading shotgun hanging upon two nails over the mantel. "Dat wus de gun I

toted," Buckeye lied, as he pointed toward it. "I kilt a Johnnyreb wid bofe barrels eve'y day excusin' Sundays. Yes, suh, I shore did!"

"Dat's fine!" Elder Atts murmured indifferently.

"Did you receive hon'able scars endurin' of de war, elder?" Buckeye continued.

"Naw, suh. I wus too young."

"By gawsh, I warn't too young to receive hon'able scars. I got two of 'em! Dey's behine my back. A low-down mean Johnnyreb come up an' punched me behind wid his bay'net when I wus runnin' to ketch up wid de other Yanks."

"Dat shore int'rusters my mind," Atts muttered sleepily.

"You wanten see dem hon'able scars, elder?" Buckeye inquired eagerly.

"I shore do," Atts responded, resting his head on his hand and closing his eyes.

"I'll show 'em to you," Buckeye howled joyfully. "I kin prove I got 'em all right; but I have to take my britches off fust!"

He sprang up to accomplish this task; but at that moment the room filled with colored ladies, who had come in to join the preacher and the prospective bridegroom. Buckeye promptly forgot his honorable scars and turned his attention to his gun.

"Ladies," he asked, "did any of you-all serve in de late war between de Norf an' de Souf?"

The women merely giggled.

Buckeye reached up and lifted down his old shotgun.

"Now, ladies," he said, "I's gwine show you how dey done in de war."

Handling his gun with perilous carelessness, he brought the butt down upon the floor with force enough to have exploded both caps under the hammers; but the Providence which takes care of drunken men and fools saved his head from being blown off.

"Fix bay'nets!" he bawled.

Jerking his ramrod out of the rings, he rammed it down one of the barrels, upon a charge of squirrel-shot.

"Shoulder arms!" he howled, and jerked the gun up from the floor.

The women moved slowly back against the wall.

"'Bout face, forward, march!" he whooped, and began to prance around the room.

One by one the women slipped through the door into the hall. When all had es-

caped, Buckeye missed his admiring audience and followed them.

On a shelf in the rear of the hallway Lunie had set the handsomest clock in the Drake home, a thing of ivory and marble and hand-wrought gold. The moving pendulum attracted Buckeye's attention.

"Halt!" he bawled, bringing his gun to position.

The pendulum moved on.

"Halt!" Buckeye shrieked.

But the clock was deaf to his commands, and the moving pendulum did not cease.

"Halt, or I fire!" Buckeye howled.

The gun came to his shoulder; there was a deafening roar. The ramrod of the gun crashed through the face of the clock. The rebound of the weapon hurled Buckeye through the door, set him down forcibly on the floor of the porch, and bumped his head against the porch railing with a resounding whack.

The Rev. Vinegar Atts, rushing out to Buckeye's rescue, found him in a dazed heap, gazing about with an utter incomprehension of what had happened.

"Revun'," he inquired pitifully, "whar wus you when Vicksbu'g blowed up?"

Upon these war-time memories Lunie descended in her fury.

"You wuthless nigger!" she screamed. "Whut you mean by bustin' ole miss's clock? Marse Hinry Drake 'll shoot dat ramrod plum' through yo' ole woolly head fer dat!"

"Naw," Buckeye protested. "Dey won't do me nothin'. Maybe dey'll gimme 'bout thuty days. Added to de res', how much days would dat be?"

"Shut yo' mouf up!" Lunie snapped. "Revun', he'p me git him in de kitchen."

Between them they conducted the man of the house to the kitchen, seated him in a chair, and left him with the command to stay where he was put until the time for the wedding.

"All right," he consented. "Dat 'll gimme time to pick up a good heart an' res' my mind."

For a long time Buckeye sat before the kitchen stove, sleeping, dreaming. Then he woke up, roused by the noise in the other part of the house.

"I's cold!" Buckeye complained, glaring at the stove. "Whar is de poker to dis here fire?"

He looked under the stove and on top of it; then he rose and walked around to

the rear. On the shelf behind the stove, where Lunie had put it, lay a twenty-shot Roman candle. Seizing this, Buckeye opened the stove door and stirred the hot embers with the business end of the Roman candle. Then he placed his new poker up against the side of the stove and sat down.

Instantly his drink-bleared eyes were attracted by a sputtering of sparks on the end of the poker. He picked it up and endeavored to shake the sparks off.

Pow!

A ball of blue fire shot from the end of the candle, struck against the stovepipe, ricocheted around the room, and fell in a blazing mass at Buckeye's feet. The astonished householder left the kitchen with a whoop that would raise the dead, but he took his "poker" with him. Shrieking like a maniac, he danced around the dining-room.

Pow! Pow!

Two balls of fire struck against the ceiling, bounced back to the floor, bumped around the feet of the crowd, and sent them plunging into the parlor, Buckeye following.

The Rev. Vinegar Atts sat in the largest rocking-chair, his round head lolling backward, his short, fat legs spraddled out, his monstrous, gorillalike hands folded peacefully across his rotund stomach.

Pow!

A ball of yellow fire struck Vinegar Atts in the center of his anatomy, doubled him over with a shriek, and sent him out into the hall bellowing like a terrified cow.

Buckeye was scared witless. He had never seen a Roman candle, and this devil-stick in his hand, vomiting fire and sparks—he was too much frightened to let it drop from his hand.

In the hallway he became a whirling dervish in the center of a devil's wheel of spinning sparks—shrieking, gyrating, roaring, praying. He bawled for help, for the mercy of the Lord, for the immediate consolations of religion; while the Roman candle spat its fire-balls about the house with deadly precision, each one dropping in the midst of some inflammable material.

At last the sparks ceased, the "poker" subsided into a dead and harmless calm, and the house blazed merrily in seventeen different places.

Not a negro could be seen. Buckeye, thoroughly sober now, dropped his Roman candle and fled with the rest.

The white folks came to the fire, the fire-engines clattered to the scene, negroes from other sections of the town came to assist; but before any of these arrived the cabin had crumbled to a mass of glowing embers, and there was not a darky in the crowd who knew what had happened.

V

THROUGH the long hours of the night Buckeye and Lunie, with their eleven children, sat in the switch-cane on the other side of the Dorfoche Bayou and watched the glowing embers of their cabin.

In the cold, gray dawn they crept fearfully back to the yard and surveyed the ruins, now turning to white ash and dust. They sat down upon the ground. There was no one to help, no one to offer them sympathy, hope, or encouragement.

"Whut's de white folks gwine say when dey comes back from de Mardi Gras?" Lunie asked.

"I ain't gwine be here to hear it," Buckeye answered positively.

"Whut you reckon dey's gwine do 'bout dem lace curtins an' dat bedspread an' dat booze-bowl and dat clock?" Lunie persisted.

"I ain't never gwine to know, Lunie," Buckeye declared. "I won't be here when dey does it."

On the other side of the bayou sounded a long, pitiful howl, reverberating through the swamp.

"Dat houn'-dawg is lonesome," Lunie remarked.

Buck stood up and looked toward the swamp.

"Lunie," he commanded, "you dig aroun' in dem ashes and see kin you find a skillet whut ain't too hot to tote. I got a ham hid over in de woods. I'll go git dat and whistle up dat dawg. Den us is gwine leave dis place."

Two hours later a pitiful procession, headed by a man carrying a ham, eleven children following, the rear brought up by a hound-dog and a woman carrying a skillet, paused at the top of a hill to take a farewell look at Tickfall.

"Oh, Lawd," Buckeye prayed aloud, "he'p us, good Marster, fer we's gwine to furrin parts. Hab mussy on dis ole jack-ace of a nigger an' dis ole fool woman an' dese 'leben idjut chillun. An' thank 'e, good Marster, fer dis here ham to feed us on de way!"

Little Comrade *

A Story of the War of 1914

by Burton E. Stevenson

Author of

"The Destroyer," "The Marathon Mystery," etc.

A full length book novel, printed complete in this issue

CHAPTER I

THE THIRTY-FIRST OF JULY

"LET us have coffee on the terrace," Bloem suggested.

As his companion nodded, he lifted a finger to the waiter and gave the order.

Both men were a little sad, for this was their last meal together, and, though they had known each other less than a fortnight, they had become fast friends. They had been thrown together by chance at the surgical congress at Vienna, where Bloem, finding the American's German lame and halting, had constituted himself a sort of interpreter, and Stewart had reciprocated by polishing away some of the roughnesses and Teutonic involutions of Bloem's formal English.

When the congress ended, they had journeyed back together in leisurely fashion through Germany, spending a day in

medieval Nuremberg, another in odorous Würzburg, and a third in picturesque Heidelberg, where Bloem had sought out some of his old comrades, and had initiated his American friend into the mysteries of an evening session in the Hirschgasse. Then they had turned northward to Mayence, and so down the terraced Rhine to Cologne. Here they were to part, Bloem to return to his work at Elberfeld, Stewart for a week or two in Brussels and Paris on his way home to America.

Bloem's train was to leave in an hour, and it was the consciousness of this that kept them silent until their waiter came to tell them that their coffee was served. As they followed him through the hall a tall man in the uniform of a captain of infantry entered from the street. His eyes brightened as he caught sight of Bloem.

"Ach, Herrman!" he cried.

Bloem, turning, stopped an instant for a burlesque salute, then threw himself into the other's arms. A moment later he was

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dragging him forward to introduce him to Stewart.

"My cousin," he cried, "Ritter Bloem, a soldier, as you see—a great fire-eater! Cousin, this is my friend, Dr. Bradford Stewart, whom I had the good fortune to meet at Vienna."

"I am pleased to meet you, sir," said the captain, shaking hands and speaking excellent English.

"You must join us," Bloem interposed. "We are just going to have coffee on the terrace. Come with us."

He caught the other by the arm; but the captain shook his head.

"No, I cannot come," he said. "I really cannot, much as I should like to do so. Dr. Stewart," he added, a little hesitatingly, "I trust you will not think me discourteous if I take my cousin aside for a moment."

"Certainly not," Stewart assured him.

"I will join you on the terrace," said Bloem.

Nodding good-by to the captain, Stewart followed the waiter, who had stood by during this exchange of greetings, and now led the way to a little table at one corner of the broad balcony looking out over the square.

"Shall I pour the coffee, sir?" he asked, as Stewart sat down.

"No; I will wait for my companion."

As the waiter bowed and stepped back Stewart leaned forward with a little gasp of admiration.

Below him lay the green level of the Domhof, its close-clipped trees outlined stiffly against the lights behind them. Beyond rose the choir of the great cathedral, with its fretted pinnacles and flying buttresses and towering roof. By day he had found its exterior somewhat cold and bare and formal, but nothing could be more beautiful than it was now, shimmering in the moonlight, bathed in luminous shadow, lacelike and mysterious.

He was still absorbed in this fairy vision when Bloem rejoined him. Even in the half light of the terrace Stewart could see that he was deeply moved. His face, usually smooth and full of healthy color, was almost haggard, his eyes seemed dull and sunken.

"No bad news, I hope?" Stewart asked.

Without answering, Bloem signaled the waiter to pour the coffee and sat watching him in silence.

"That will do," he said in German. "We will ring if we have need of you."

As the waiter withdrew he glanced nervously about the terrace. It was deserted save for a noisy group around a table at the farther end.

"There is very bad news, my friend," he added, almost in a whisper. "There is going to be—war!"

Stewart stared for an instant, astonished at the gravity of his tone. Then he nodded comprehendingly.

"Yes," he said; "I had not thought of it; but I suppose a war between Austria and Servia will affect Germany somewhat. Only I was hoping the powers would interfere and stop it."

"It seems it cannot be stopped," said Bloem gloomily. "Russia is mobilizing to assist Servia. Austria is Germany's ally, and so Germany must come to her aid. Unless Russia stops her mobilization, we shall declare war against her. Our army has already been called to the colors."

Stewart breathed a little deeper.

"But perhaps Russia will desist when she realizes her danger," he suggested. "She must know she is no match for Germany."

"She does know it," Bloem agreed; "but she also knows that she will not fight alone. It is not against Russia we are mobilizing—it is against France."

"Against France?" echoed the other. "But surely—"

"Do not speak so loud, I beg of you," Bloem cautioned. "What I am telling you is not yet generally known—perhaps the dreadful thing we fear will not happen, after all. But France is Russia's ally—she will be eager for war—for forty years she has been preparing for this moment."

"Yes," agreed Stewart, smiling, "I have heard of *la revanche*; I have seen the mourning wreaths on the Strassburg monument. I confess," he added, "that I sympathize with France's dream of regaining her lost provinces. So do most Americans. We are a sentimental people."

"I, too, sympathize with that dream, in a way," said Bloem quickly. "I am a sentimentalist, too, I suppose—perhaps a dreamer; yet I know other Germans who have something of the same feeling. We realize that the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine was a terrible mistake. We should have been generous in our hour of triumph, as we were to Austria five years before; in-

stead, we inflicted cruelly hard terms upon a defenseless foe, and we have reaped a merited reward of detestation. The provinces which cost us so much have been a source of weakness, not of strength. We have had to fortify them, to police them, to hold them in stern repression. Even yet they must be treated as conquered ground. You do not know—you cannot realize—what that means!" He stared out gloomily into the night. "I have served there," he added hoarsely.

A cold shiver ran over Stewart's frame. He felt as if he had suddenly found himself at the brink of a fathomless abyss.

"But since France has not yet declared war," he said, "surely you will wait—"

"Ah, my friend," Bloem broke in, "we cannot afford to wait. We must strike quickly and with all our strength. There is no secret as to Germany's plan—France must be crushed under a mighty blow before she can defend herself; after that it will be Russia's turn."

"And after that?"

"After that? After that we shall seize more provinces and exact more huge indemnities—and add just so much to our legacy of fear and hatred!"

Stewart looked out over the lighted square.

"I can't understand it," he said at last. "I don't understand how such things can be. They aren't possible. They're too terrible to be true. This is a civilized world—such things can never happen—humanity wouldn't endure it!"

Bloem passed a trembling hand before his eyes, like a man awaking from a horrid dream.

"Let us hope so, at least," he said.

"But I am afraid; I shake with fear! Europe is top-heavy under the burden of her awful armaments. Now, or at some future time, she must come tumbling down. She must—she must"—he paused, searching for a word—"she must crumble. Perhaps that time has come."

"I don't believe it," Stewart protested stoutly. "Some day she will realize the folly of excessive armaments, and they will cease."

"I wish I could believe so!" said Bloem sadly. "You do not know, my friend, how we here in Germany, for example, are weighed down by militarism. You do not know the arrogance, the ignorance, the narrow-mindedness of the military caste.

They do nothing for Germany—they add nothing to her art, her science, or her literature—they add nothing to her wealth—they destroy rather than build up—and yet it is they who rule the empire. We are a pacific people, we love our homes and a quiet life; we are not a militant people; and yet every man in Germany must march to war when the word is given. We ourselves have no voice in the matter. We have only to obey."

"Obey whom?" asked Stewart.

"The emperor," answered Bloem.

"With all our progress, my friend, with all our development in science and industry, with all our literature and art and music, with all our philosophy, we still live in a medieval state, ruled by a monarch who believes himself divinely appointed, who can do no wrong, and who, in time of war, at least, has absolute power over us. And the final decision as to war or peace is wholly in his hands. Understand, I do not complain of the emperor. He has done great things for Germany; he has often cast his influence for peace. But he is surrounded by aristocrats intent only on maintaining their privileges, who are terrified by the growth of democratic ideas, and who believe that the only way to checkmate democracy is by a great war. It is they who preach the doctrine of blood and iron; who hold that Caesar is sacrosanct. The emperor tries to restrain them; but some day they will prove too strong for him." He stopped suddenly, his finger to his ear. "Listen!" he said.

Down the street, from the direction of the river, came a low, continuous murmur, as of the wind among the leaves of a forest. As it grew clearer it resolved itself into the tramp, tramp of iron-shod feet. Bloem leaned far forward, staring into the darkness.

Suddenly, at the corner, three mounted officers appeared; then a line of soldiers wheeled into view; then another and another and another, moving as one man. The head of the column crossed the square, passed behind the church, and disappeared; but still the tide poured on, with slow and regular undulation, dim, mysterious, and threatening. At last the rear of the column came into view, passed, disappeared; the clatter of iron on stone softened to a shuffle, to a murmur, died away.

With a long breath Bloem sat erect and

passed his handkerchief across his shining forehead.

"There is one battalion," he said; "one unit composed of a thousand lesser units—each unit a man with a soul like yours and mine; with hopes and ambitions; with women to love him; and now marching to death, perhaps, in the ranks yonder, without in the least knowing why. There are four million such units in the army the emperor can call into the field. I am one of them—I shall march like the rest!"

"You!"

"Yes—I am a private in the Ninety-Eighth." Bloem spread out his delicate, sensitive surgeon's hands and looked at them. "I was once a corporal," he added, "but my discipline was faulty and I was reduced to the ranks."

Stewart also stared at those beautiful hands, so expressive, so expert. How vividly they typified the waste of war!

"But it's absurd," he protested, "that a man like you—highly trained, highly educated, a specialist—should be made to shoulder a rifle. In the ranks you are worth no more than the most ignorant peasant."

"Not so much," corrected Bloem. "Our ideal soldier is one whose obedience is instant and unquestioning."

"But why are you not placed where you would be most efficient—in the hospital corps, perhaps?"

"There are enough old and middle-aged surgeons for that duty. Young men must fight." He pushed back his chair and rose abruptly. "I must say good-by. My orders are awaiting me at Elberfeld."

"Your orders?"

"To-morrow I go to my depot—I put on my uniform, shoulder my rifle, and hang about my neck the metal tag stamped with my number. I cease to be an individual—I become a soldier. Good-by, my friend. Think of me sometimes in that far-off, sublime America of yours! One thing more—do not linger in Germany. Things will be very different here under martial law. Get home as quickly as you can; and, in the midst of your peace and happiness, pity us poor blind worms who are forced to slay one another!"

"But I will go with you to the station," Stewart protested.

"No, no," said Bloem; "you must not do that. I am to meet my cousin. Good-by—*lebe wohl!*"

"Good-by—and good luck!" Stewart wrung the hand thrust into his. "You have been most kind to me."

Bloem answered only with a little shake of the head, then turned resolutely and hastened from the terrace.

Stewart sank back into his seat, more moved than he would have believed possible by this parting from a man whom, a fortnight before, he had not known at all. Poor Bloem! To what fate was he being hurried?

And then Stewart started violently, for some one had touched him on the shoulder. He looked up, to find standing over him a tall man dressed in a dark-blue uniform and wearing a spiked helmet.

"Your pardon, sir," said the man in careful English. "I am an agent of the police. I must ask you certain questions."

"Very well," agreed Stewart with a smile. "Go ahead—I have nothing to conceal. But won't you sit down?"

"I thank you," and the policeman sat down heavily. "You are, I believe, an American?"

"Yes."

"Have you a passport?"

"Yes, I was foolish enough to get one before I left home. All my American friends laughed at me and told me I was wasting a dollar."

"I should like to see it."

Stewart put his hand into an inner pocket, drew out the crackling parchment, and passed it over. The other took it, unfolded it, glanced at the red seal and at the date, then read the rather vague description of its owner, and finally drew out a note-book.

"Please sign your name here," he said, and indicated a blank page.

Stewart wrote his name, and the officer compared it with the signature at the bottom of the passport. Then he nodded, folded it up, and handed it back across the table.

"It is quite regular," he said. "How long have you been in Germany?"

"About two weeks. I attended the surgical congress at Vienna."

"You are a surgeon by profession?"

"Yes."

"You are now on your way home?"

"Yes."

"When will you leave Germany?"

"I am going from here to Aix-la-Chapelle in the morning, and expect to leave

there for Brussels to-morrow afternoon, or Sunday morning at the latest."

The officer noted these details in his book.

"At what hotel will you stay in Aachen?" he asked.

"I don't know. Is there a good one near the station?"

"The Kölner Hof is near the station. It is not large, but it is very good. It is starred by Baedeker."

"Then I will go there," said Stewart.

"Very good." The officer wrote "Kölner Hof, Aachen," after Stewart's name, closed his note-book, and slipped it into his pocket. "You understand, sir, that it is our duty to keep watch over all strangers, as much for their own protection as for any other reason."

"Yes," assented Stewart, "I understand. I have heard that there is some danger of war."

"Of that I know nothing," said the other coldly, and rose quickly to his feet. "I bid you good night, sir."

"Good night," responded Stewart, and watched the upright figure until it disappeared.

Lighting a fresh cigar, he gazed out at the great cathedral, nebulous and dream-like in the darkness, and tried to picture to himself what such a war would mean as Bloem had spoken of. With men by the million dragged into the vast armies, who would harvest Europe's grain, who would work in her factories, who would conduct her business? Above all, who would feed the women and children?

And where would the millions come from needed daily to keep such armies in the field? Where could they come from, save from the sweat of inoffensive people, who must be starved and robbed and ground into the earth until the last penny was wrung from them?

Along the line of battle thousands would meet swift death, and thousands more would struggle back to life through the torments of hell, only to find themselves maimed and useless. But how trivial their sufferings beside the hopeless, year-long martyrdom of the countless thousands who would never see a battle, who would know little of the war—who would only know that never thereafter would there be food enough, warmth enough—

Stewart started from his reverie, to find the waiter putting out the lights. Shiver-

ing as with a sudden chill, he hastily sought his room.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST RUMBLINGS

NEXT morning, as Stewart ate his breakfast, he told himself that Bloem's talk of war had been mere foolishness, and smiled at his own absurd fears of the night before. War? Nonsense! Europe would never be guilty of such folly—such a deliberate plunge to ruin.

There were no evidences of war; the life of the city was moving in its accustomed round, so far as he could see; and there was vast reassurance in the quiet and orderly service of the breakfast-room. No doubt the powers had bethought themselves, had interfered, had stopped the strife between Austria and Serbia, had ceased mobilization—in a word, had saved Europe from an explosion which would have shaken her and the rest of the world from end to end.

But when Stewart asked for his bill the proprietor, instead of entrusting it, as usual, to the head waiter, presented it in person.

"If Herr Stewart would pay in gold it would be a great favor," he said.

Like all Americans, being unaccustomed to gold and finding its weight burdensome, Stewart carried bank-notes whenever it was possible to do so. Emptying his pockets now, he found, besides a miscellaneous lot of silver and nickel, a single small gold coin, value ten marks.

"But I have plenty of paper," he said. Producing his pocketbook, he spread five notes for a hundred marks each before him on the table. "What's the matter with this?"

"There is nothing at all the matter with it, sir," the little German hastened to assure him; "only, just at present, there is a preference for gold. I would advise that you get gold in exchange for these notes, if possible."

"I have a Cook's letter of credit," said Stewart. "They would give me gold. Where is Cook's office here?"

"It is but a step up the street, sir," answered the other eagerly. "Come, I will show you."

Going to the door, he pointed out the office at the end of a row of buildings

jutting out toward the cathedral, and Stewart, the bank-notes in his hand, hastened thither.

He found quite a crowd of people there, drawing money on travelers' checks and letters of credit, and he noticed that they were all being paid in gold. They, too, it seemed, had heard rumors of war, and had been advised to get gold; but most of them treated the rumors as a joke, and were heeding the advice only because they needed gold to pay their bills.

Even if there was war, surely it could not affect them. At the most, it would add a spice of excitement and adventure to the remainder of their European tour. What they most feared was that they would not be permitted to see any of the fighting! A few of the more timid were shamefacedly getting ready to turn homeward, but by far the greater number had made up their minds not to alter their plans in any detail. So much Stewart gathered from the gossip he overheard as he stood in line waiting his turn; then he was in front of the cashier's window.

The cashier looked rather dubious when Stewart laid the bank-notes down and asked for gold.

"I am carrying one of your letters of credit," Stewart explained, and produced it. "I got these notes on it at Heidelberg just the other day. Now it seems they're no good."

"They are perfectly good," the cashier assured him; "but some of the tradespeople, who are always suspicious and ready to take alarm, are demanding gold. How long will you be in Germany?"

"I go to Belgium to-night or to-morrow."

"Then you can use French gold," said the cashier with visible relief. "Will one hundred marks in German gold carry you through? Yes? Then I think I can manage it." When Stewart assented, he counted out five twenty-mark gold pieces and twenty-four twenty-franc pieces. "I think you are wise," he added in a low tone, as Stewart gathered up the money and bestowed it about his person, "to leave Germany as soon as possible. We do not wish to alarm any one, and we are not offering advice, but if war comes, this will not be a pleasant place for strangers."

"Is it really coming?" Stewart asked. "Is there any news?"

"There is nothing definite, but I believe

that it is coming"; and he turned to the next in line.

Stewart hastened back to the hotel, where his landlord received with evident pleasure the thirty marks needed to settle the bill. When the transaction was ended the little German glanced nervously about the office and then leaned close.

"You leave this morning, do you not, sir?" he asked in a tone cautiously lowered.

"Yes; I'm going to Aix-la-Chapelle."

"Take my advice, sir," said the landlord earnestly, "and do not stop there. Go straight on to Brussels."

"But why?" asked Stewart. "Everybody is advising me to get out of Germany. What danger can there be?"

"No danger, perhaps, but very great annoyance. At any moment the Kaiser may order a proclamation posted declaring Germany in a state of war."

"Suppose he does—what then? What difference can that make to me, or to any American?"

"I see you do not know what those words mean. When Germany is in a state of war all civil authority ceases; the military authority is everywhere supreme. The state takes charge of all railways, and no private persons will be permitted on them until the troops have been mobilized, which will take perhaps a week. Even after that the trains will run only when the military authorities permit, and never past the frontier. The telegraphs are taken over, and will send no private messages. No person may enter or leave the country until his identity is clearly established. Every stranger will be arrested if there is any reason to suspect him. All motor vehicles may be seized, all horses, all stores of food. Business stops, because almost all the men must go to the army. I may have to close my hotel, because there will be no men left to work for me. Every shop will be closed which cannot be managed by women. Your letter of credit will be worthless, because there will be no way in which our bankers can get gold from America. No—at that time Germany will be no place for strangers!"

Stewart listened incredulously, for all this sounded like the wildest exaggeration. He could not conceive of business and industry falling to pieces like that—it was too firmly founded, too strongly built!

"What I have said is true, believe me," said the little man earnestly, seeing his

guest's skeptical countenance. "One thing more—have you a passport?"

"Yes," said Stewart, and tapped his pocket.

"That is good. That will save you trouble at the frontier. Ah, here is your baggage. Good-by, sir, and a safe voyage to your most fortunate country!"

A brawny porter shouldered the two suit-cases which held Stewart's luggage, and the American followed him along the hall to the door. As he stepped out upon the terrace he saw drawn up there about twenty men—some with the black coats of waiters, some with the white caps of cooks, some with the green aprons of porters—while a bearded man in a spiked helmet was checking off their names in a little book and handing each of them a folded paper.

At the sound of Stewart's footsteps the bearded man turned and cast upon the stranger the cold, impersonal glance of German officialdom. Then he looked at the porter.

"Get back here as quickly as possible," he said gruffly, in German, and returned to his checking.

As they crossed the Domhof and skirted the rear of the cathedral Stewart noticed that many of the shops were locked and shuttered, and that the street seemed strangely deserted. Only as they neared the station did the crowd increase. It was evident that many tourists, advised, perhaps, as Stewart had been, had made up their minds to get out of Germany; but the train drawn up beside the platform was a long one, and there was room for everybody.

It was a good-humored crowd, rather inclined to laugh at its own fears and to protest that this journey was entirely in accordance with a prearranged schedule; but it grew quieter and quieter as moment after moment passed and the train did not start.

That a German train should not start punctually was unusual; that it should wait for twenty minutes beyond its time was staggering. But the station-master, pacing solemnly up and down the platform, paid no heed to the inquiries addressed to him, and the guards answered only by a shake of the head which might mean anything.

Suddenly, above the noises of the station, continuous and insistent, came the

low, distant, ceaseless shuffle of approaching feet. A moment later the head of an infantry column appeared at the station entrance. It halted there, and an officer, in a long gray cape that fell to his ankles, strode toward the station-master, who hastened to meet him.

There was a moment's conference, and then the station-master, saluting for the tenth time, turned to the expectant guards.

"Clear the train!" he shouted in stentorian German, and the guards sprang eagerly to obey.

The scene that followed was indescribable. All the Germans in the train hastened to get off, as did everybody else who understood what was demanded and knew anything of the methods of militarism. But many did not understand; a few who did made the mistake of standing upon what they conceived to be their rights, and refusing to be separated from their baggage. All alike, men, women, and children, were lifted from their seats and deposited upon the platform. Some were deposited upon their feet—but not many. Women screamed as rough and seemingly hostile hands were laid upon them; men, red and inarticulate with anger, attempted ineffectually to resist. In a moment one and all found themselves shut off by a line of soldiers drawn up before the train.

Then a whistle sounded, and the soldiers began to file into the carriages in the most systematic manner. Twenty-four men entered each compartment—ten sitting down and fourteen standing up or sitting upon the others' laps. Each coach, therefore, held one hundred and forty-four, and the battalion of seven hundred and twenty men exactly filled five coaches, just as the General Staff had long ago figured out that it would do.

Stewart realized that if any carriages were empty they would be those at the end of the train, and quietly made his way thither. In the rear coach he found a compartment in which sat one man, evidently a German, with a melancholy, bearded face. Before the door stood a guard watching the battalion entrain.

"May one get aboard?" Stewart inquired in his best German.

The guard held up his hand for an instant; then the gold-braided station-master shouted a sentence which Stewart could not distinguish; but the guard dropped his

hand and nodded. Looking back, the American saw a wild mob charging down the platform toward him. He hastily swung himself aboard.

As he dropped into his seat he could hear the shrieks and oaths of the *mêlée* outside; and in another moment a party of breathless and disheveled women were storming the door. They were panting, exhausted, inarticulate with rage and chagrin; they fell in, rolled in, stumbled in, until the compartment was jammed.

Stewart was swept from his seat at the first impact, but rallied and did what he could to bring order out of chaos. He could not but admire the manner in which his bearded fellow passenger clung silently to his seat until the last woman was aboard, and then reached quickly out, slammed shut the door, and held it shut, despite the entreaties of the lost souls who drifted despairingly past along the platform, as if he were blind, deaf, and totally uninterested in what was passing around him.

Then Stewart looked at the women. Nine were crowded into the seats; eight were standing; all were red and perspiring; most of them had plainly lost their tempers. Stewart was perspiring himself, and he got out his handkerchief and mopped his forehead; then he ventured to speak.

"Well!" he said. "So this is war! I have always heard it was warm work!"

Most of the women merely glared at him and went on adjusting their clothing, fastening up their hair, and straightening their hats; but one—a buxom woman of forty-eight or fifty, who was crowded next to him, and who had evidently suffered more than her share of the general misfortune—turned sharply.

"Are you an American?" she demanded.

"I am, madam."

"And you stand by and see your countrywomen treated in this perfectly outrageous fashion?"

"My dear madam," protested Stewart, "what could one man—even an American—do against a thousand?"

"You could at least—"

"Nonsense, mother!" broke in another voice, and Stewart turned to see that it was a pale, slender girl of perhaps twenty-two who spoke. "The gentleman is quite right. Besides, I thought it rather good fun."

"Good fun!" snapped her mother.

"Good fun to be jerked about and trampled on and insulted! And where is our baggage? Shall we ever see it again?"

"Oh, the baggage is safe enough," Stewart assured her. "The troops will detain somewhere this side the frontier, and we can all take our old seats."

"But why should they travel by this train? Why should they not take another train? Why should they—"

"Are we all here?" broke in an anxious voice. "Is any one missing?"

There was a moment's counting, then a general sigh of relief. The number was found correct.

From somewhere up the line a whistle sounded. The state of the engine-driver's nerves could be inferred from the jerk with which he started—quite an American jerk. All the women who were standing screamed and clutched at one another, and swayed back and forth as if wrestling. And indeed Stewart found himself wrestling with the buxom woman.

"I cannot stand!" she declared. "It is outrageous that I should have to stand!" She fixed glittering eyes upon the bearded stranger. "No American would remain seated while a woman of my age was standing!"

But the bearded stranger gazed blandly out of the window at the passing landscape.

There was a moment's silence, during which every one looked at the heartless culprit. Stewart had an uneasy feeling that, if he were to do his duty as an American, he would grasp the offender by the collar and hurl him through the window. Then the woman next to the stranger bumped resolutely into him, pressed him into the corner, and disclosed a few inches of the seat.

"Sit here, Mrs. Field," she said. "We can all squeeze up a little."

The pressure was tremendous when Mrs. Field sat down; but the carriage was strongly built, and the sides held. The slender girl came and stood by Stewart.

"What's it all about?" she asked. "Has there been a riot or something?"

"There is going to be a most awful riot," answered Stewart, "unless all signs fail. Germany is mobilizing her troops to attack France."

"To attack France! How outrageous! It's that Kaiser, I suppose! Well, I hope France will simply clean him up!"

"Excuse me," suggested Stewart, with a glance at the bearded stranger, who was still staring steadily out of the window, "but if I were you, I'd wait till I was out of Germany before saying so. It would perhaps be safer!"

"Safer!" echoed an elderly woman with a high nose. "I'd like to see them harm an American!"

Stewart turned away to the window, with a gesture of despair, and caught the laughing eyes of the girl who stood beside him. He looked at her with fresh interest. It was something to find a woman who could preserve her sense of humor under such circumstances.

"You have been doing the Continent?" he asked.

"Yes, seventeen of us—all from Philadelphia."

"And you've had a good time, of course?"

"We'd have had a better if we'd brought a man along. I never realized before how valuable men are. Women aren't fitted by nature to wrestle with time-tables and cabbies and hotel bills and head waiters. This trip has taught me to respect men more than I have ever done."

"Then it hasn't been wasted. But you say you're from Philadelphia. I know some people in Philadelphia—the Garland Grants are sort of cousins of mine."

But the girl shook her head.

"That sort of thing happens only in novels," she said. "But there is no reason I shouldn't tell you my name, if you want to know it. It is Millicent Field, and its possessor is very undistinguished—just a school-teacher—not at all in the same social circle as the Garland Grants."

Stewart colored a little.

"My name is Bradford Stewart," he said, "and I also am very undistinguished—just a surgeon on the staff at Johns Hopkins. Did you get to Vienna?"

"No; that was too far for us."

"There was a clinic there; I saw some wonderful things. These German surgeons certainly know their business."

Miss Field made a little grimace.

"Perhaps," she admitted. "But do you know the impression of Germany that I am taking home with me? It is that Germany is a country run solely in the interest of the male half of creation."

Stewart laughed.

"There was a book published a year or

two ago," he said, "called 'Germany and the Germans.' Perhaps you read it?"

"No."

"I remember it for one remark. Its author says that Germany is the only country on earth where the men's hands are better kept than the women's."

Miss Field clapped her hands in delight.

"Delicious!" she cried. "And it is true," she added, more seriously. "Did you see the women cleaning the streets in Munich?"

"Yes."

"And harvesting the grain, and spreading manure, and carrying great burdens—doing all the dirty work and the heavy work. What are the men doing, I should like to know?"

"Madam," spoke up the bearded stranger by the window, in a deep voice which made everybody jump, "I will tell you what the men are doing. They are in the army, preparing themselves for the defense of their fatherland. Do you think it is of choice they leave the harvesting and street-cleaning and carrying of burdens to their mothers and wives and sisters? No; it is because for them is reserved a greater task—the task of confronting the revengeful hate of France, the envious hate of England, the cruel hate of Russia. That is their task to-day, madam, and they accept it with light hearts, confident of victory!"

There was a moment's silence. Mrs. Field was the first to find her voice.

"All the same," she said, "that does not justify the use of cows as draft animals!"

The German stared at her an instant in astonishment, then turned away to the window with a gesture of contempt, as of one who refused to argue with lunatics, and paid no further heed to the Americans.

With them the conversation turned from war, which none of them really believed would come, to home, for which they were all longing. Home, Stewart told himself, means everything to middle-aged women of fixed habits. It was astonishing that they should tear themselves away from it, even for a tour of Europe, for to them travel meant martyrdom.

Home! How their eyes brightened as they spoke the word! They were going through to Brussels, then to Ostend, after a look at Ghent and Bruges, and so to England and their boat.

"I intend to spend the afternoon at Aix-la-Chapelle," said Stewart, "and go on to Brussels to-night or in the morning. Perhaps I shall see you there."

Miss Field mentioned the hotel at which they would stop.

"What is there at Aix-la-Chapelle?" she asked. "I suppose I ought to know, but I don't."

"There's a cathedral, with the tomb of Charlemagne, and his throne, and a lot of other relics. I was always impressed by Charlemagne. He was the real thing in the way of emperors."

"I should like to see his tomb," said Miss Field. "Why can't we stop at Aix-la-Chapelle, mother?"

But Mrs. Field shook her head in emphatic dissent.

"We will get out of Germany as quickly as we can," she said, and the other members of the party nodded their hearty agreement.

Meanwhile they were passing through a beautiful and peaceful country, where war seemed incredible and undreamed of. White villas dotted the thickly wooded hillsides; quaint villages huddled in the valleys. Finally the train crossed a long viaduct and rumbled into the station at Aix-la-Chapelle.

The platform was deserted, save for a few guards and porters. Stewart opened the door and was about to step out when a guard waved him violently back. Looking forward, he saw that the soldiers were detaining.

"Good!" he said. "You can get your old seats again."

Catching the eye of the guard, he gave that official a nod which promised a liberal tip.

That worthy understood it perfectly. The moment the last soldier was on the platform, he beckoned to Stewart and his party, and assisted them to find their old compartments, ejecting a peasant who had taken refuge in one. He assured the ladies that they would have no further inconvenience, and summoned a porter to take charge of Stewart's suit-cases. In short, he did everything he could to earn the shining three-mark piece which Stewart slipped into his hand.

And then, after receiving the thanks of the ladies and promising to look them up in Brussels, Stewart followed his porter across the platform to the entrance.

Millicent Field looked after him a little wistfully.

"How easy it is for a man to do things!" she remarked to nobody in particular. "Never speak to me again of woman suffrage!"

CHAPTER III

THE LANDLADY OF THE KÖLNER HOF

FOLLOWING his porter, Stewart was engulfed in the human tide which had been beating clamorously against the gates, and which surged forward across the platform as soon as they were opened. There were tourists of all nations, alarmed by the threat of war, and there were also many people who, to Stewart at least, appeared to be Germans; and all of them were running toward the train, looking neither to the right nor left, dragging along as much luggage as they could carry.

Stepping aside for a moment out of the way of this torrent, Stewart found himself beside the bearded stranger who had waxed eloquent in defense of Germany. He was watching the crowd with a look at once mocking and sardonic. He glanced at Stewart, then turned away without any sign of recognition.

"Where do you go, sir?" the porter asked, when they were safely through the gates.

"To the Kölner Hof."

"It is but a step," said the porter, and he unhooked his belt, passed it through the handles of the suit-cases, hooked it together again, and lifted it to his shoulder. "This way, sir, if you please."

The Kölner Hof proved to be a modest inn just around the corner, where Stewart was received most cordially by the plump, high-colored landlady. Lunch would be ready in a few minutes; meanwhile, if the gentleman would follow the waiter, he would be shown to a room where he could remove the traces of his journey. But first would the gentleman fill in the blank required by the police?

So Stewart filled in the blank, which demanded his name, his nationality, his age, his business, his home address, the place from which he had come to Aix-la-Chapelle, and the place to which he would go on leaving it. He handed the document back to the smiling landlady and followed a hangdog waiter up the stairs.

The room into which he was shown was a very pleasant one, and scrupulously clean. As he made his toilet Stewart reflected how much more of comfort, and how much warmer a welcome, might often be found at the small inns than at the big ones, and mentally thanked the officer of police who had recommended this one.

He found he had further reason for gratitude when he sat down to lunch, served on a little table set in one corner of a shady court—the best lunch he had eaten for a long time; as he told the landlady when she came out presently, knitting in hand, and sat down near him. She could speak a little English, it appeared, and a little French, and these, with Stewart's little German, afforded a medium of communication, limping, it is true, but sufficient.

She received the compliments of her guest with evident pleasure.

"I do what I can to please my patrons," she said; "and indeed I have had no cause to complain, for the season has been very good. But this war—it will ruin us innkeepers—there will be no more travelers. Already, I hear, Spa, Ostend, Baden—such places as those—are deserted, just when the season should be at its best. What do you think of it—this war?"

"Most probably it is just another scare," said Stewart. "War seems scarcely possible in these days—it is too cruel, too absurd. An agreement will be reached."

"I am sure I hope so, sir, but it looks very bad. For nearly a week now our troops have been passing through Aachen toward the frontier."

"How far away is the frontier?"

"About ten miles. The custom-house is at Herbesthal. I have heard that great entrenchments are being built all along there. There has been talk of war many times before, but there have never been such preparations as these. How long will the gentleman remain in Aachen?"

"I am going on to Brussels this evening. There is a train at six o'clock, is there not?"

"At six o'clock, yes, sir. It will be well for the gentleman to have a light dinner before his departure. The train may be delayed, and the journey to Brussels is of seven hours."

"Very well," agreed Stewart, rising. "I will be back about five. How does one get to the cathedral?"

"Turn to your right, sir, as you leave the hotel. The first street is the Franzstrasse. It will lead you straight to the church."

Stewart thanked her and set off. The Franzstrasse proved to be a wide thoroughfare, bordered by handsome shops, but many of them were closed, and the street itself was almost deserted. It opened upon a narrower street, at the end of which Stewart could see the lofty choir of the minster.

Presently he became aware of a chorus of high-pitched voices, which grew more and more distinct as he advanced. It sounded like a lot of women in violent altercation. In a moment he saw what it was, for he came out upon an open square covered with market-stalls, and so crowded that one could scarcely get across it. Plainly the frugal wives of Aachen were laying in supplies against the time when all food might grow scarce and dear; and from the din of high-pitched bargaining it seemed evident that the crafty market-people had already begun to advance their prices.

Stewart paused for a while to contemplate this scene, more violent and warlike than any he had yet witnessed. Then, edging around the crowd, he arrived at the cathedral, the most irregular and eccentric that he had ever seen—a towering Gothic choir attached to an octagonal Byzantine nave. But that nave is very impressive, as Stewart found when he stepped inside it; and soon, on a block of stone in its pavement, he saw the words, "Carlo Magno," and knew that he was at the tomb of the great emperor.

It is perhaps not really the tomb, but for emotional purposes it answers very well, and there can be no question about the marble throne and other relics which Stewart presently inspected, under the guidance of a black-clad verger. Then, as there was a service in progress in the choir, he sat down, at the verger's suggestion, to wait till it was over.

In a small chapel at his right a group of candles glowed before an altar dedicated to the Virgin, and here, on the low benches, many women knelt in prayer. More and more slipped in quietly—young women, old women, some shabby, some well clad—until the benches were full; and after that the newcomers knelt on the stone pavement and besought the Mother of

Christ to guard their sons and husbands and sweethearts, summoned to fight the Kaiser's battles.

Looking at them—at their bowed heads, their sad faces, their shrinking figures—Stewart realized more fully than ever before how terrible is the burden that war lays on women. Fortunate the ones who can find comfort in prayer!

A touch on the arm roused him from his sad contemplation. It was the verger, ready to take him through the choir, where the service was ended. It is a beautiful choir, but Stewart had no eyes for it. The memory of those kneeling women weighed him down. For the first time he really believed that war might come.

As he came out into the streets again it seemed to him that they were emptier than ever. Nearly all the shops were closed; there was no vehicle of any kind; there were scarcely any people. And then, as he turned the corner into the great square in front of the town hall, he saw where the people were, for a great crowd had gathered there—a crowd of women and children and old men—while from the steps before the entrance an official in gold-laced uniform and cocked hat was delivering a harangue.

At first Stewart could catch only a word here and there, but as he edged closer he found that the harangue was a eulogy of the Kaiser—of his high wisdom, his supreme greatness, his passionate love for his people. The Kaiser had not sought war, he had strained every nerve for peace; but the jealous enemies who ringed Germany round, who looked with envy upon her greatness, and dreamed only of destroying her, would not give her peace. So, with firm heart and abiding trust in God, the emperor had donned his shining armor, confident that Germany would emerge from the struggle not only victorious, but greater and stronger than ever.

Then the speaker read the Kaiser's address, and reminded his hearers that all they possessed, even to their lives and the lives of their loved ones, belonged to their fatherland, to be yielded ungrudgingly when the need arose. He cautioned them that the military power was now supreme, was not to be questioned, and would brook no resistance or interference. It was for each of them to go quietly about his affairs, to obey his emperor, and to pray for victory.

There were some scattered cheers, but for the most part the crowd stood in a sort of dazed silence and watched two men put up beside the entrance to the Rathhaus the red posters which declared Germany in a state of war. Down the furrowed cheeks of many of the older people the hot tears poured in streams, perhaps at remembrance of the horrors and suffering of Germany's last war with France, and some partial realization of the far greater horrors and suffering to come.

Then by twos and threes they drifted away to their homes, talking in bated undertone, or shuffling silently along, staring straight before them.

Stewart made his way across the square and through the deserted streets back toward his hotel. He felt within himself a mighty peace; his soul, shaken to its depths, stood firm again. It was impossible that wrong should triumph, that humanity should be thrust backward toward serfdom. No—men's faces had been set too long toward freedom!

CHAPTER IV

THE MYSTERY OF THE SATIN SLIPPERS

TURNING the last corner, Stewart saw his landlady standing at her door, looking anxiously up and down the street. Her face glowed with pleasure when she saw him—a pleasure so deep and genuine that the American was a little puzzled by it.

"But I am glad to see you!" she cried, as he came up, her face wreathed in smiles. "I have heard rumors of horrible things. I feared I know not what! But you are safe, it seems."

"Quite safe. In fact, I was never in any danger."

"I was foolish, no doubt, to have fear; but in times like these one never knows what may happen."

"True enough," Stewart agreed; "but an American with a passport in his pocket ought to be safe anywhere."

"Ah, you have a passport—that is good! The police have been here to question you. They will return presently."

"The police?"

"There have been some spies captured, it seems, and others are trying to leave the country; so every one is suspected."

They had walked back together along the hall as they talked, and now they

stopped at the foot of the stairs. The little landlady seemed very nervous—as was perhaps natural amid the alarms of war. Beads of perspiration stood out on her forehead.

"The police visited your room," she went on. "Perhaps you will find your baggage disarranged."

Stewart smiled wryly.

"So it seems they really suspect me?" he asked.

"They suspect every one," the landlady repeated.

She was standing with her back toward the door, and Stewart wondered why she should watch his face so closely.

Suddenly, over her shoulder, he saw the waiter with the hangdog face approaching along the hall.

"Such anxiety is quite natural," said the landlady rapidly, in German, raising her voice a little. "I can understand it. But it is not remarkable that you should have missed her—the trains are so irregular. I will send her to you the moment she arrives. Ah, Hans," she added, turning at the sound of the waiter's footsteps, "so you are back again! You will take up some hot water to the gentleman at once. And now you will excuse me, sir; I have the dinner to attend to"; and she hurried away, carrying the waiter with her.

Stewart stood for an instant staring after her; then he turned and mounted slowly to his room. What had the woman meant? Why should he be anxious? Who was it he had missed? "I will send her to you the moment she arrives." No—she could not have said that. He must have misunderstood. His German was very second-rate, and she had spoken rapidly. But what *had* she said?

He was still pondering this problem, vaguely uneasy, when a knock at the door told him that the hot water had arrived. As he opened the door the landlady's voice floated up the stair.

"Hans!" she called. "There is something wrong with the stove. Hasten, hasten!"

Stewart took the can that was thrust into his hand, turned back into his room, and proceeded to make a leisurely toilet. If his landlady had not told him, he would never have suspected that his baggage had been searched by the police. But then he was a careless and hasty packer, by no means precise.

The events of the day had shaken him more deeply than he had realized. An undercurrent of emotion seemed to be running through his mind, and more than once he caught himself standing quite still, in an attitude of profound meditation, though he was not conscious that he had really been thinking of anything.

"Come, old man," he said at last; "this won't do at all. You must pull yourself together!"

He had been absently turning over the contents of one of his bags, and suddenly he found himself staring at a pair of satin ball-slippers, into each of which was stuffed a blue silk stocking. For quite a minute he stared, doubting his own senses; then he picked up one of the slippers and looked at it.

It was a tiny affair, very delicate and beautiful—a real jewel in foot-wear, such as Stewart, with his limited feminine experience, had never seen before. Indeed, he might have doubted that it was intended for actual service but for the slight discoloration inside the heel, which proved that the slipper had been worn more than once.

Very deliberately he drew out the stocking, also a jewel in its way, of a texture so diaphanous as to be almost cobweb-like. Then he picked up the other slipper, and held the two side by side. Yes, they were mates.

"But where on earth could I have picked them up?" he asked himself. "In what strange fit of absent-mindedness could I have packed them with my things? I couldn't have picked them up—I never saw them before."

He sat down suddenly, a slipper in either hand. They must have come from somewhere; they could not have concealed themselves among his things. If he had not placed them there, then some one else did. But who? And for what purpose?

The police? His landlady had said that they had searched his luggage; but what possible object could they have had for increasing it by two satin slippers and a pair of stockings? Such an action was farcical—French-farcical! He could not be incriminated in such a way. He had no wife to be made jealous; and even if he had—

"This is the last straw!" he muttered to himself. "Either the world has gone mad, or I have!"

Moving as in a dream, he placed the slippers side by side upon the floor, contemplated them for a moment longer, and then proceeded slowly with his dressing. He found an unaccustomed difficulty in putting his buttons in his cuffs, and then he remembered that he had been searching for a tie when he found the slippers.

The slippers! He turned and looked at them. Yes, they were still there—they had not disappeared. Very coquettish they looked, standing there side by side, as if waiting for their owner.

"Only one thing is necessary to complete this pantomime," Stewart told himself, "and that is that the princess should suddenly appear and claim them. Well, I'm willing! A woman with a foot like that—"

There was a knock at the door.

"In a moment!" he called.

"But it is I!" cried a woman's voice in English—a sweet, high-pitched voice, quivering with excitement. "It is I!"

The door was flung open with a crash. A woman rushed toward him—he saw vaguely her vivid face, her shining eyes; behind her, more vaguely still, he saw the staring eyes of the hangdog waiter. Then she was upon him.

"At last!" she cried.

She flung her arms about him and kissed him on the lips—kissed him closely, passionately, as he had never been kissed before.

CHAPTER V

ONE WAY TO ACQUIRE A WIFE

STEWART, standing petrified, collar in hand, thrilling with the warmth of that caress, was conscious that one of his arms had dropped about the woman's waist, and that she was cuddling to him, patting him on the shoulder and smiling up into his eyes. Over her shoulder he caught a glimpse of the sardonic smile on the ugly face of the waiter as he withdrew and closed the door.

"But how glad I am!" the woman rattled on at the top of her voice. "And what a journey! I am covered with dirt! I shall need gallons of water!"

She walked rapidly to the door, opened it, and looked out. Then she closed and locked it, and, to his amazement, caught up one of his handkerchiefs and hung it

over the knob so that it masked the key-hole.

"They will not suspect," she said in a lower tone, noticing his look. "They will suppose it is to conceal our marital endearments. Now we can talk; but we will keep to English, if you don't mind. Some one might pass. Is everything arranged? Is the passport in order?"

Her eyes were shining with excitement, her lips were trembling. As he still stood staring, she came close to him and shook his arm.

"Can it be that you do not know English?" she demanded. "But that would be too stupid! You understand English, do you not?"

"Yes, madam," stammered Stewart. "At least, I have always thought so."

"Then why do you not answer? Is anything wrong? You look as if you did not expect me."

"Madam," answered Stewart gravely, "will you kindly pinch me on the arm—here in the tender part? I have been told that is a test."

She nipped him with a violence that made him jump.

"Do not tell me that you are drunk?" she hissed viciously. "That would be too much! Drunk at such a moment!"

But Stewart had begun to pull himself together.

"No, madam, I am not drunk," he assured her; "and your pinch convinces me that I am not dreaming." He rubbed his arm thoughtfully. "There remains only one hypothesis—that I have suddenly gone mad. And yet I have never heard of any madness in my family."

"Is this a time for fooling?" she snapped. "Tell me at once—"

"There is, of course, another hypothesis," went on Stewart calmly, "and that is that it is you who are mad—"

"Were you not expecting me?" she repeated.

Stewart's eyes fell upon the satin slippers, and he smiled.

"Why, certainly I was expecting you," he answered. "I was just saying to myself that the only thing lacking in this fairy tale was the beautiful princess—and, presto! there you were."

She was looking at him wildly, with every sign of sudden terror. She caught her lower lip between the thumb and little finger of her left hand and stood a mo-

ment expectantly, holding it so and staring up at him. Then, as he stared back uncomprehendingly, she dropped into a chair and burst into a flood of tears.

Now a pretty woman in tears is, as every one knows, a sight to melt a heart of stone, especially if that heart be masculine. This woman was very pretty, and Stewart's heart was very masculine, with nothing granitic about it.

"Oh, come," he protested, "it can't be so bad as that! Let us sit down and talk this thing out quietly. Evidently there is a mistake somewhere."

"Then you did not expect me?" she demanded, mopping her eyes.

"Expect you? No—except as the fulfillment of a fairy tale."

"You do not know who I am?"

"I haven't the slightest idea."

"Nor why I am here?"

"No."

"Then I am lost!" she breathed, and turned so pale that Stewart thought she was going to faint.

"Lost!" he protested. "In what way lost? What do you mean?"

By a mighty effort she fought back the faintness and regained a little of her self-control.

"At this hotel," she explained in a hoarse voice, "I was to have met a man who was to accompany me across the frontier. He had a passport for both of us—for himself and for his wife."

"You were to pass as his wife?"

"Yes."

"But you did not know the man?"

"Evidently, or I should not have—"

She stopped, her face crimson with embarrassment.

"H-m!" said Stewart, reflecting that he, at least, had no reason to regret the mistake. "Perhaps this unknown is in some other room."

"No; you are the only person in the hotel."

"Evidently, then, he has not arrived."

"Evidently," she assented, and stared moodily at the floor, twisting her handkerchief in nervous, trembling hands.

Stewart rubbed his chin thoughtfully as he looked at her. She seemed not more than twenty, and she was almost startlingly beautiful, with that peculiar lustrous duskiness of skin more common among the Latin races than with us. Slightly built, she yet gave the impression of hav-

ing in reserve unusual nervous energy, which would brace her to meet any crisis.

But what was she doing here? Why should she be driven to leave Germany as the wife of a man whom she had never seen? Or was it all a lie—was she merely an adventuress seeking a fresh victim?

Stewart put that thought away, definitely and forever. He had had enough experience of women, as surgeon in a public clinic, to tell innocence from vice; and he knew that it was innocence he was facing now.

"You say you can't leave Germany without a passport?" he asked at last.

"Nobody can leave Germany without a passport." She sat up suddenly and looked at him, a new light in her eyes. "Is it possible," she demanded with trembling lips, "can it be possible that you have a passport?"

"Why, yes," said Stewart, "I have a passport. Unfortunately, it is for myself alone. Never having had a wife—"

But she was standing before him, her hands outstretched, tremulous with eagerness.

"Let me see it!" she cried. "Oh, let me see it!"

He got it out, gave it to her, and watched her as she unfolded it. Here was a woman, he told himself, such as he had never met before—a woman of nerve, of fire!

She was looking up at him with flaming eyes.

"Mr. Stewart," she said in a low voice, "you can save me, if you will."

"Save you?" echoed Stewart. "But how?"

She held the open passport toward him.

"See, here, just below your name, there is a blank space covered with little parallel line. If you will permit me to write in that space the words 'accompanied by his wife,' I am saved. The passport will then be for both of us."

"Or would be," agreed Stewart dryly, "if you were my wife. As it happens, you are not."

"It is such a little thing I ask of you," she pleaded. "We go to the station together—we take our seats in the train—at the frontier you show your passport. An hour later we shall be at Liège, and there our ways will part; but you will have done a noble action."

There was witchery in her eyes, in her

voice. Stewart felt himself slipping—slipping; but he caught himself in time.

"I am afraid," he said gently, "that you will have to tell me first what it is all about."

"I can tell you in a word," she answered, drawing very near to him and speaking almost in a whisper. "I am a Frenchwoman."

"But surely," Stewart protested, "the Germans will not prevent your return to France! Why should they do that?"

"It is not a question of returning, but of escaping. I am an Alsatian. I was born at Strassburg."

"Oh!" said Stewart, beginning vaguely to understand. "An Alsatian!"

"Yes; but only Alsations understand the meaning of that word. To be an Alsatian is to be a slave, is to be the victim of insult, oppression, tyranny, past all belief. My father was killed by the Germans; my two brothers have been dragged away into the German army and sent to fight the Russians, since Germany knows well that no Alsatian corps would fight the French. Oh, how we have prayed and prayed for this war of restitution—the war which will give us back to France!"

"Yes; I hope it will," agreed Stewart heartily.

"Of a certainty you do," she said eagerly. "America is on our side! And you, as an American, will assist me to escape my enemies."

"Your enemies?"

"I will not deceive you," she said earnestly. "I trust you. I have lived all my life at Strassburg and at Metz, fortified cities which the Germans believe to be impregnable, but which are not impregnable if attacked at the right point. They have their weak spot, just as every fortress has. I have dissembled, I have lied—I have pretended to admire the German soldiers—I have permitted them to kiss my hand—I have listened to their confidences. Always, always I have kept my eyes and ears open. Bit by bit I have gathered what I sought—a hint here, a hint there. I must get to France, my friend, and you must help me! It is not for myself I ask it—though, if I am taken, there will be for me only one brief moment, facing a file of soldiers; I ask it for France—for your sister republic!"

Stewart's resistance broke down before the girl's pleading.

"Very well," he said abruptly. "I consent."

Before he could draw back she had flung herself on her knees before him, had caught his hand, and was covering it with tears and kisses.

"Come, come, my dear!" he said, bending over her and raising her to her feet.

She was shaken with great sobs. As she turned her streaming eyes up to him, her lips moving as if in prayer, Stewart saw how young she was, how lonely, how beautiful, how greatly in need of help. She had been fighting for her country with all her strength, with every resource, desperately, straining every nerve—and victory had been too much for her. But in a moment she recovered her self-control.

"There, it is over," she said, looking up at him and smiling. "But the joy of your words was almost too great. I shall not give way like that again. And I shall not try to thank you. I think you understand—I cannot thank you; there are no words great enough!"

Stewart nodded smilingly.

"Yes, I understand," he said.

"We have many things to do," she went on rapidly. "First, the passport"; and she caught it up from the chair on which she had laid it.

"I would point out to you," said Stewart, "that there may be a certain danger in adding the words you mentioned."

"But it is precisely for those words this blank space has been left."

"That may be true; but unless your handwriting is identical with that on the rest of the passport, and the ink the same, the first person who looks at it will see the trick."

"Trust me!" she said.

Drawing a chair to the table, she laid the passport before her and studied it carefully. From the little bag she had carried on her arm she took a fountain pen. She tested it on her finger-nail, and then, easily and rapidly, wrote "accompanied by his wife" across the blank space below Stewart's name.

Looking over her shoulder, Stewart was astonished by the cleverness of the forgery.

"There!" she added. "Let it lie for five minutes, and no one on earth can tell that those words were not written at the same time and by the same hand as all the others."

A sudden doubt shook her hearer. Where had she learned to forge like that? Perhaps, after all—

She read his thought in his eyes.

"To imitate handwriting is something which every member of the secret service must learn. This, on your passport, is a formal hand very easily imitated. But I must get rid of this pen."

She glanced quickly about the room, then went to the open fireplace, and threw the pen above the bricks which closed it off from the flue. Coming back, she motioned Stewart to sit down, and drew a chair very close to his.

"Now we have certain details to arrange," she said. "Your name is Bradford Stewart?"

"Yes."

"Have you a nickname?"

"My father always called me Tommy."

"Tommy! Excellent! I shall call you Tommy! What is your profession?"

"I am a surgeon."

"Where do you live in America?"

"In Baltimore, in the State of Maryland."

"Where have you been in Europe?"

"To a clinical congress at Vienna, and then back through Germany."

"Perfect! It could not be better! Now listen carefully. Your wife's name is Mary. You have been married four years."

"Any children?" asked Stewart.

"Please be serious!" she protested, but from the sparkle in her eye Stewart saw that she was amused rather than offended.

"I should have liked a boy of three and a girl of two," he said. "But no matter—go ahead!"

"While you went on to Vienna to attend your horrid clinic, and to learn new ways of cutting up human bodies, your wife remained at Spa, because of a slight nervous affection—"

"From which," said Stewart, "I am happy to see that she has entirely recovered."

"Yes," she agreed; "she is quite well again. Spa is in Belgium, so the Germans can make no inquiries there. We arranged to meet here and to go on to Brussels together. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly," said Stewart, who was thoroughly enjoying himself. "By the way, Mary," he added, "no doubt it was your shoes and stockings I found in my grip."

He pointed to where the slippers stood side by side. His companion looked at them, and then went off into a peal of laughter.

"How ridiculous! But yes—they were intended for mine."

"How did they get into my luggage?"

"The woman who manages this inn placed them there. She is one of us."

"But for what purpose?"

"So that the police might find them when they searched your bags."

"Why on earth should they search my bags?"

"There is a certain suspicion attaching to this place. It is impossible altogether to avoid it, so it is necessary to be very careful. The landlady thought that the discovery of the slippers might, in a measure, prepare the police for the arrival of your wife."

"Then she knew you were coming?"

"Certainly—since last night."

"And when the man who was to meet you did not arrive she decided that I would do?"

"I suppose so."

"But how did she know I had a passport?"

"Perhaps you told her."

Yes, Stewart reflected, he had told her, and yet he was not altogether satisfied. When had he told her? Surely it was not until he returned from his tour of the town; then there was not time—

"Here is your passport," said his companion, abruptly breaking in upon his thoughts. "Fold it up and put it in your pocket. And do not find it too readily when the police ask for it. You must seem not to know exactly where it is. Also pack your belongings. Yes, you had better include the shoes; and I will try to make myself a little presentable."

She opened the tiny bag from which she had produced the pen.

"It seems to me," said Stewart, as he proceeded to obey, "that one pair of slippers and one pair of stockings is rather scanty baggage for a lady who has been at Spa for a month."

"My baggage went direct from Spa to Brussels," she answered from before the mirror, "in order to avoid the customs examination at the frontier. Any other questions?"

"Only the big one as to who you really are, and where I'm going to see you again

after you've delivered your report—and all that."

His back was toward her as he bent over his bags, and he did not see the quick glance she cast at him.

"It is impossible to discuss that now," she said hastily. "And I would warn you that the servant, Hans, is a spy. Be very careful before him—be careful always, until we are safe across the frontier. There will be spies everywhere—a false word, a false movement, and all may be lost. Are you ready?"

Stewart, rising from buckling the last strap, found himself confronting the most adorable girl he had ever seen. Every trace of the journey had disappeared. Her cheeks were glowing, her eyes were shining, and when she smiled Stewart noticed a dimple set diagonally at the corner of her mouth—a dimple evidently placed just there to invite and challenge kisses.

The admiration which flamed into his eyes was perhaps a trifle too ardent, for, looking at him steadily, she took a quick step toward him.

"We are going to be good friends, are we not?" she asked. "Good comrades?"

And Stewart, looking down at her, understood. She was pleading for respect; she was telling him that she trusted him; she was reminding him of the defenselessness of her girlhood, driven by hard necessity into this strange adventure. And, understanding, he reached out and caught her hand.

"Yes," he agreed. "Good comrades—just that!"

She gave his fingers a swift pressure.

"Thank you," she said. "Now we must go down. Dinner will be waiting. Fortunately the train is very late."

Stewart, glancing at his watch, saw that it was almost six o'clock.

"You are sure it is late?" he asked.

"Yes; at least an hour. We will send some one to inquire. Remember what I have told you about the waiter—about every one. Not for an instant must we drop the mask, even though we may think ourselves unobserved. You will remember?"

"I'll try to," Stewart promised. "But don't be disappointed if you find me a poor actor. I'm not in your class at all. However, if you'll give me the cue, I think I can follow it."

"I know you can. Come!"

She opened the door, restoring him the handkerchief which she had hung over the knob.

As they went down the stairs together Stewart saw the landlady waiting anxiously at the foot. One glance at them, and her face became radiant.

"Ah, you are late!" she cried, shaking a reproving finger. "But I expected it. I would not permit Hans to call you. When husband and wife meet after a long separation they do not wish to be disturbed—not even for dinner. This way! I have placed the table in the court—it is much pleasanter there when the days are so warm."

She bustled before them to a vine-shaded corner of the court, where a snowy table awaited them. A moment later Hans entered with the soup. Stewart, happening to meet his glance, read the suspicion there.

"Well," he said, breaking off a piece of the crisp bread, "this is almost like home, isn't it? I can't tell you, Mary, how glad I am to have you again." He reached out and gave her hand a little squeeze. "Looking so well, too! Spa was evidently just the place for you."

"Yes—it was very pleasant, and the doctor was very kind. But I am glad to get back to you, Tommy," she added, gazing at him fondly. "I could cry with joy just to look at that honest old face of yours!"

Stewart felt his heart skip a beat.

"You will make me conceited, if you don't take care, old lady!" he protested. "And I've got enough cause for conceit already, with the most beautiful woman in the world sitting opposite me, telling me that she loves me. Don't blame me if I lose my head a little!"

The ardor in his tone brought the color into her cheeks.

"You mustn't look at me like that!" she said. "People will think we are on our honeymoon!"

"Instead of having been married four years! I wonder how John and Sallie are getting along! Aren't you just crazy to see the kids?"

She choked over her soup, but managed to nod mutely. Then, as Hans removed the plates and disappeared in the direction of the kitchen, he added in a lower tone:

"You must allow me the children. I find I can't be happy without them!"

"Very well," she agreed, the dimple sparkling. "You have been so kind that it is impossible for me to refuse you anything."

"There is one thing I can't understand. Your English astonishes me. Where did you learn to speak it so perfectly?"

"Ah, that is a long story! Perhaps I shall one day tell it to you—if we ever meet again."

"We must. I demand that as my reward!"

She held up a warning finger as steps sounded along the passage; but it was only the landlady bringing the wine. The German woman was exuberant—a trifle too exuberant, as Stewart's companion told her with a quick glance.

The dinner proceeded from course to course. Stewart had never enjoyed a meal more thoroughly, and he was glad to see that his companion seemed to be quite at her ease. What meal, he asked himself, could possibly be commonplace, shared by such a woman?

The landlady presently despatched Hans to the station to inquire about the train, while she herself did the serving, and the two women ventured to exchange a few confidential words. Stewart, listening, caught a glimpse of an intricate system of espionage extending to the very heart of Germany. But he asked no questions; indeed, some instinct held him back from wishing to know more. "Spy" is not a pretty word, nor is a spy's work pretty work; he refused to think of it in connection with the lovely girl opposite him.

"We shall have the police with us soon," said the landlady in a low tone. "Hans will run at once to tell them of *madame's* arrival."

"Why do you keep him?" asked Stewart.

"Oh, it is by keeping him that I avert suspicion. If there was anything wrong here, the police tell themselves, this spy of theirs would discover it. Knowing him to be a spy, I am on my guard. Besides, he is very stupid. But there, I will leave you. He may be back at any moment."

He came back just in time to serve the coffee, with the information that their train would not arrive until seven thirty; then he stood watching them and listening to their talk of home and friends and plans for the future.

Stewart began to be proud of his facility of invention, and of his abilities as an actor; but he had to admit that he was the merest bungler compared with his companion. Her mental quickness dazzled him, her high spirits were far more exhilarating than the wine. He ended by forgetting that he was playing a part; for the moment, at least, it all seemed true, real; this woman was his wife, they were going on together—

Suddenly Hans stirred in his corner. Heavy steps were coming toward the court along the sanded floor of the corridor. In a moment three men in spiked helmets stepped out into the fading light of the evening.

"The police to speak to you, sir," said Hans.

Stewart, turning, found himself looking into three faces, in which hostility and suspicion were only too apparent.

CHAPTER VI

THE SNARE

As the three men advanced to the table Stewart saw that they were armed with short swords and that each of them carried a heavy pistol at his belt.

"You speak German?" one of them asked gruffly.

"A little. But I would prefer to speak English," answered Stewart.

"We will speak German. What is your nationality?"

"I am an American."

"Were you born in America?"

"Yes."

"Have you a passport?"

"Yes."

"Let me see it."

Stewart was about to reach into his pocket and produce it when he remembered his companion's suggestion. So he felt in one pocket after another without result, while the Germans shifted impatiently from one foot to the other.

"It must be in my other coat," he said, half to himself, enjoying the situation immensely. "But no; I do not remember changing it. Ah, here it is!"

He drew the paper forth and handed it to the officer, who took it, unfolded it, and stepped out into the court, where the light was better. He read it through carefully, compared the description point by point

with Stewart's appearance, and then came back to the table.

"Who is this person?" he asked, and nodded toward the girl.

"She is my wife," answered Stewart, with a readiness which astonished himself.

"She did not arrive here with you."

"No"; and he told the story of how he had left her at Spa to recuperate from a slight nervous attack, while he himself went on to Vienna. He omitted no detail. Indeed, he improvised a few new ones, and with his limited German—which his hearers regarded with evident contempt—the story took some time to tell.

The Germans showed no sign of impatience, but, long before he had ended, Stewart's companion was twisting nervously in her seat.

"What is the matter?" she demanded petulantly. "I never knew you were such a talker, Tommy! Tell them to go away; they are ugly, and they annoy me."

"What does she say?" asked the officer.

Stewart was certain that at least one of them knew English, so he judged it best to translate literally.

"She wants to know what is the matter," he answered. "She asks me to tell you to go away—that you annoy her."

The officer smiled grimly.

"She does not understand German?"

"Not a word," said Stewart glibly.

"What is her name?"

"Mary."

"Her maiden name?"

"Mary Agnes Fleming," answered Stewart, repeating the first name that occurred to him, and thanking his stars that the officer could scarcely be acquainted with the lesser lights of English fiction.

"Is that correct?" asked the policeman suddenly, turning upon her.

Stewart's heart gave a leap of fear; but after a stare at the officer she turned to her companion.

"Was he speaking to me, Tommy?" she asked.

It was only by a heroic effort that Stewart choked back the sudden snort of laughter that rose in his throat.

"Yes," he managed to answer; "he wants to know your maiden name."

"What on earth for?"

"I don't know; but you'd better tell him."

"My maiden name was Mary Agnes Fleming," she said, looking at the officer

with evident disapprobation. "Though what business it is of yours I can't see."

"What does she say?" demanded the policeman, and again Stewart translated literally.

The officer stood staring intently at both of them, till the lady, with a flash of indignation, turned her back.

"Really, Tommy," she said over her shoulder, "if you don't get rid of this brute, I shall never speak to you again!"

"He is a policeman, dear," Stewart explained, "and imagines that he is doing his duty. I suppose they *do* have to be careful in war-time. We must be patient."

"I will look at her passport," said the German suddenly, and held out his hand.

"My passport is for both of us," Stewart explained. "Those words, 'accompanied by his wife,' make it inclusive."

The officer went out into the light again and examined the words with minute attention.

"I find no description of her," he said, coming back.

"There is none," assented Stewart impatiently; "but there is a description of me, as you see. The passport adds that I am accompanied by my wife. I tell you that this lady is my wife. That is sufficient."

The officer glanced at his companions uncertainly. Then he slowly folded up the passport and handed it back.

"When do you depart from Aachen?" he asked.

"By the first train for Brussels. I am told that it will arrive in about half an hour."

"Very well," said the other. "I regret if I have seemed insistent, but the fact that the lady did not arrive with you appeared to us singular. I will report your explanation to my chief."

He turned on his heel and stalked away, followed by his men. Stewart drew a deep breath.

"Well," he began, when he was stopped by a sharp tap from his companion's foot.

"Such impudence!" she cried. "I was astonished at your patience, Tommy! You, an American, letting a Prussian policeman bulldoze you like that! I am ashamed of you!"

Glancing around, Stewart saw the hang-dog Hans hovering in the doorway.

"He was a big policeman, my dear," he explained, laughing. "I shouldn't have

had much of a chance with him, to say nothing of his two men. If we want to get to Brussels, the safest plan is to answer calmly all the questions the police can think of. But it is time for us to be going. There will be no reserved seats on this train!"

"You are right," agreed his companion. "I am quite ready."

So he asked for the bill, paid it, sent Hans up for the luggage, and presently they were walking toward the station, with the waiter staggering along behind.

Stewart, looking down at his companion, felt more and more elated over the adventure. He had never passed a pleasanter evening; it had just the touch of excitement needed to give it relish. Unfortunately, its end was near; an hour or two in a crowded railway-carriage, and—that was all!

She glanced up at him and caught his eyes.

"What is it, my friend?" she asked. "You appear sad."

"I was just thinking," answered Stewart, "that I do not even know your name!"

"Speak lower!" she said quickly. "Or, better still, do not say such things at all. Do not drop the mask for an instant until we are out of Germany."

"Very well," Stewart promised. "But once we are across the border, I warn you that I shall have certain very serious things to say."

"And I promise to listen patiently," she answered, smiling.

At the entrance to the station they were stopped by a guard, who demanded their tickets. Stewart was about to produce his, when his companion touched him on the arm.

"Run and get them, Tommy," she said. "I will wait here."

As he hastened away Stewart trembled to think how nearly he had blundered. How could he have explained to the authorities the fact that he was traveling with a book of Cook's circular tickets, while his wife was buying her tickets from station to station?

There was a long line of people in front of the ticket-office, and their progress was slow, for two police officers stood at the head of the line and interrogated every applicant for a ticket before they would permit it to be given to him.

As he moved slowly forward Stewart

saw two men jerked violently out of the line and placed under arrest. He wondered uncomfortably if the officers had any instructions with regard to him, but, when his turn came, he faced them as unconcernedly as he was able. He explained that he and his wife were going to Brussels, showed his passport, and finally hastened away triumphant with the two precious bits of pasteboard.

It seemed to him that the last difficulty had been encountered and overcome, and it was only by an effort that he kept himself from waving the tickets in the air as he rejoined his companion. In another moment they were past the barrier. Hans was permitted to enter with them, and mounted guard over the luggage.

The platform was thronged with a motley and excited crowd, among whom were many officers in long gray coats and trailing swords, evidently on their way to join their commands. They were stalking up and down, with a lofty disregard for mere civilians, talking loudly and gesticulating fiercely. Stewart was watching them with an amusement perhaps a little too apparent, for his companion suddenly passed her arm through his.

"I should like a little walk," she said. "I have been sitting too long. It was good of you to write so regularly while you were at Vienna," she rattled on, as they started along the platform. "I am sure your letters helped with my cure. But you have not told me—have you secured our passage?"

"I shall know when we get to Brussels. Cook is trying to get us an outside room on the Adriatic."

"Do we go back to England?"

"Not unless we wish to. We can sail from Cherbourg."

They had reached the end of the platform, and, turning suddenly, Stewart found himself face to face with a bearded German who had been close behind them, and who shot a sharp glance at him and his companion before stepping aside with a muttered apology. Not until they had passed him did Stewart remember that he had seen the man before. It was the surly passenger in the crowded compartment on the journey from Cologne.

His companion had not seemed to notice the fellow, and went on talking of the voyage home, and how glad she would be to get there. Not until they turned again

at the farther end, and found the platform for a moment clear around them, did she relax her guard.

"That man was a spy," she whispered quickly. "We are evidently still suspected. What sort of railroad ticket have you?"

"A book of Cook's coupons."

"I feared as much. You must get rid of it—it is quite possible that you will be searched at the frontier. No, no!" she added, as Stewart put his hand to his pocket. "Not here! You would be seen—everything would be lost. I will devise a way."

Stewart reflected with satisfaction that only a few coupons were left in the book. But why should he be searched? He had thought the danger over; but he began uneasily to suspect that it was just beginning. Well, it was too late to draw back, even had he wished to do so, and most emphatically he did not. He was willing to risk a good deal for another hour of this companionship; and then there was that explanation at the end—his reward—

There was a sharp whistle down the line, and the train from Cologne rolled slowly in.

"First class," said Stewart to Hans, as the latter picked up the luggage.

He speedily realized that they would be fortunate if they got into the train at all. The first carriages were crowded with soldiers; and then there were two carriages half filled with officers, upon whom no one ventured to intrude. The three rear carriages were already full, and Stewart had resigned himself to standing up when Hans shouted:

"This way, sir; this way!"

The waiter started to run as fast as the heavy suit-cases would permit. Staring after him, Stewart saw that an additional carriage was being pushed up to be attached to the train.

"That fellow has more brains than I gave him credit for," he said. "Come along!"

Before the car had stopped Hans, with a disregard of the regulations, which proved how excited he was, had wrenched open the door of the first compartment and clambered aboard. By the time they reached it he had the luggage in the rack, and sprang down to the platform with a smile of triumph.

"Good work!" said Stewart. "I didn't

think you had it in you!" He dropped a generous tip into the waiting hand. "Come, my dear"; and he helped his companion aboard.

Hans slammed the door shut after them, touched his cap, and hurried away.

"Well, that was luck!" Stewart added, and dropped to the seat beside his companion. "But look out for the deluge in another minute!"

She was looking out of the window at the excited mob sweeping along the platform.

"The crowd is not coming this way," she said after a moment. "A line of soldiers is holding it back. I think this carriage is intended for the officers."

Stewart groaned.

"Then we shall have to get out! Take my advice, and don't wait to be asked twice!"

"Perhaps they will not need this corner. At any rate, we will stay until they put us out. Take my advice—forget all the German you know, and flourish your passport frequently. Germans have a great respect for a red seal."

But, strangely enough, they were not disturbed. A number of officers approached the carriage and, after a glance at its inmates, passed on to the other compartments. Stewart, putting his head out of the window, saw that a line of police was still keeping back the crowd.

"Really," he said, "this seems too good to be true! It looks as if we were going to have this compartment to ourselves."

He turned smilingly to glance at her, and the smile remained frozen on his lips. Her face was deathly pale, her eyes were staring, and she was pressing her hands tight against her heart.

"You're not ill?" he asked, genuinely startled.

"Only very tired," she answered, controlling her voice with evident difficulty. "I think I shall try to rest a little"; and she settled herself more comfortably in her corner. "The journey from Spa quite exhausted me." Then with her lips she formed the words: "Be careful!"

"All right," said Stewart. "Go to sleep if you can."

She gave him a warning glance from under half-closed lids, then laid her head back against the cushions and closed her eyes.

Stewart, after a last look along the plat-

form, raised the window half-way to protect his companion from the draft, then dropped into the corner opposite her. He got out a cigar and lighted it with studied carelessness, though he was disgusted to see that his hand was trembling. He was tingling all over with the sudden sense of danger—tingling as a soldier tingles as he awaits the order to charge.

But what danger could there be? He thrilled at a sudden thought. Was this compartment intended as a trap? Had they been guided to it and left alone here in the hope that, thrown off their guard, they would in some way incriminate themselves? Was there an ear glued to some hole in the partition—the ear of a spy crouching in the next compartment?

Stewart pulled his hat forward over his eyes, as if to protect them from the light. Then he went carefully back over the sequence of events which had led them to this compartment.

It was Hans who had brought them to it—and Hans was a spy. It was he who had selected it, who had stood at the door so that they would go no farther. It was he who had slammed the door.

Was the door locked? Stewart's hand itched to try the handle; but he did not dare. Some one was perhaps watching as well as listening. The fact that they had been permitted to enter a carriage reserved for officers—that on such a crowded train they were in undisturbed possession of a whole compartment—yes, it was proof enough!

The station-master's whistle echoed shrilly along the platform, and the train glided slowly away.

Darkness had come. As they passed through the silent environs of the town Stewart wondered why the streets seemed so gloomy. Looking again, he understood. Only a few of the street-lights were burning. Already the economies of war had begun.

The train entered a long tunnel, at whose entrance a file of soldiers with fixed bayonets stood on guard. At regular intervals the light from the windows flashed upon an armed patrol. Farther on a deep valley was spanned by a great viaduct, and here again there was a heavy guard.

The valley widened, and suddenly, as they swept around a curve, the travelers saw a broad plain covered with flaring lights. They were the lights of field-

kitchens; and, looking at them, Stewart realized that a mighty army lay encamped here, ready to be hurled against the French frontier.

But this was not the French frontier, he told himself perplexedly; and to make sure, he got out his Baedeker and looked at the map. No; the French frontier lay away to the south. There was no way to get to it from this point save across Belgium.

But in that case, what was this army doing here? Surely the German staff did not intend to invade a state whose neutrality and independence had been guaranteed by the great powers of Europe!

He put the book away and sat gazing thoughtfully out into the night. As far as the eye could reach gleamed the fires of the mighty bivouac. The men themselves were invisible in the darkness, for they had not thought it worth while to put up their shelter-tents on so fine a night; but along the track, from time to time, passed a shadowy patrol. Once, as the train rolled above a road, Stewart saw that it was packed with transport wagons.

Then, suddenly, the train groaned to a stop.

"The frontier!" said Stewart to himself. He glanced at his companion, but she, to all appearances, was sleeping peacefully. "We shall be delayed here," he thought, "for the troops to detrain"; and he lowered the window and put out his head to watch them do it.

The train had stopped beside a platform, and Stewart was astonished at its length. It stretched away and away into the distance, seemingly without end; and it was empty, save for a few guards.

The doors behind him were thrown open, and the officers sprang out and hurried forward. From the windows in front of him Stewart could see curious heads projecting; but the forward coaches gave no sign of life. Not a door was opened; not a soldier appeared.

"Where are we? What has happened?" asked his companion's voice, and he turned to find her rubbing her eyes sleepily.

"We are at the frontier, I suppose," he answered. "No doubt we shall go on as soon as the troops detrain."

"I hope they won't be long."

"They haven't started yet; but, of course—by George!" he added in another tone, "they aren't getting out! The

guards are driving the people out of the cars ahead of us!"

The tumult of voices raised in angry protest drew nearer. Stewart could see that the carriages were being cleared, and in no gentle manner. There was no pause for explanation or argument—just a terse order which, if not instantly obeyed, was followed by action. Stewart could not help smiling, for, in that Babel of tongues, he could detect a lot of unexpurgated American.

"There's no use getting into a fight with them," he said philosophically, as he turned back into the compartment and lifted down his suit-cases. "We might as well get out before we're put out."

He tried to open the door. It was locked.

The certainty that they were trapped turned him a little giddy.

"Who could have locked this door?" he demanded, shaking the handle savagely.

"Sit down, Tommy," his companion advised. "Don't excite yourself—and have your passport ready. Perhaps they won't put us off."

And then a face, crowned by the ubiquitous spiked helmet, appeared at the window.

"You will have to get out," said the man in German, and tried to open the door.

Stewart shook his head to show that he didn't understand, and produced his passport. The man waved it impatiently away, and wrenched at the door, shouting savagely.

"I have always been told that the Germans were a phlegmatic people," observed Stewart; "but some of them, at any rate, blow up quicker and harder than anybody I ever saw. Look at that fellow now!"

At that moment a guard came running up, produced a key, and opened the door.

"Come, get out!" said the man, with a gesture there was no mistaking. Picking up his bags, Stewart stepped out upon the platform and helped his companion to alight.

"How long shall we be detained here?" he asked in English; but the man, with a contemptuous shrug, motioned him to stand back.

Looking along the platform, Stewart saw the head of an infantry column approaching. In a moment the soldiers were pouring into the coaches with the same

mathematical precision he had seen before. But there was something unfamiliar in their appearance; and, looking more closely, Stewart saw that their spiked helmets were covered with brown cloth, and that not a button or bit of gilt glittered anywhere on the gray-green field uniforms.

Wonderful forethought, he told himself! By night these troops would be quite invisible; by day they would be merged indistinguishably with the brown soil of the fields, the gray trunks of trees, the green of hedges and bushes.

The train rolled slowly out of the station, and Stewart saw that on the track beyond there was another, also loaded with troops. In a moment it started westward after the first; and beyond it a third train lay revealed.

Glancing at his companion, Stewart was startled by the whiteness of her face, the steely glitter of her eyes.

"It looks like a regular invasion," he said. "But let's find out what is going to happen to us. We can't stand here all night. Good Heavens, what is that?"

From the air above them came the sudden whirr of a powerful engine, and, looking up, they saw a giant shape sweep across the sky. It was gone in an instant.

"A Zeppelin!" said Stewart, and felt within himself a thrill of wonder and exultation.

Oh, this would be a great war! It would be like no other ever seen upon this earth. It would be fought in the air as well as on the land; in the depths of the ocean as well as on its surface. At last all theories were to be put to the supreme test.

"You will come with me, sir," said the man in the helmet.

Stewart, with a nod, picked up his grips again before he remembered that he was ignorant of German.

"Did you say there was another train?" he asked. "Shall we be able to get away?"

The man shook his head and led the way along the platform without glancing to the right or left. As they passed the bare little station they saw that it was jammed to the doors with men and women and children, mixed in an indiscriminate mass, and evidently most uncomfortable. But their guide led them past it without stopping, and Stewart breathed a sigh of relief. Anything would be better than to be thrust into that crowd!

Again he had cause to wonder at the

length of that interminable platform; but at last, near its farther end, their guide stopped before a small, square structure, whose use Stewart could not even guess, and flung open the door.

"You will enter here," he said.

"But look here," Stewart protested, "we are American citizens! You have no right—"

The man signed to them to hurry. There was something in the gesture which stopped the words on Stewart's lips.

"Come along, my dear," he said, controlling himself. "It's no use to argue."

Bending his head at the low door, he stepped inside. In an instant the door was slammed shut, and the snap of a lock told that they were prisoners.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE TRAP

As Stewart set down his bags, still swearing softly to himself, he heard behind him the sound of a stifled sob.

"There, there!" he said. "We shall soon be all right!"

As he stretched out his arms to grope for her it seemed to him that she walked straight into them.

"Oh, oh!" she moaned, and pressed close against him. "What will they do to us? Why have they put us here?" And then he felt her lips close against his ear. "Be careful!" she whispered in the merest breath. "Speak low! There is an open window!"

Stewart's heart was thrilling. What a woman! What an actress! Well, he would prove that he, too, could play a part.

"They will do nothing to us, dear," he answered, patting her shoulder. "They will not dare to harm us. Remember, we are Americans!"

"But—but why should they put us here?"

"I don't know—I suppose they have to be careful. I'll appeal to our ambassador in the morning. He'll soon bring them to their senses, so don't worry!"

"But it's so dark," she complained; "and I'm so tired. Can't we sit down somewhere?"

"We can sit down on our bags," said Stewart. "Wait!" In a moment he had found them and placed them one upon the

other. "There you are. Now let's see what sort of a place we've come to."

He got out his match-box and struck a light. The first flare almost blinded him; then, holding the match above his head, he saw that they were in a brick cubicle about twenty feet square. In one wall there was a single small window, without glass, but heavily barred. The place was empty, save for a pile of barrels against one end.

"It's a storehouse of some kind," he said, and then he sniffed sharply. "Gasoline! I'd better not strike any more matches."

He sat down beside her, and for some moments they were silent. Almost unconsciously his arm found its way about her waist. She did not draw away.

"Do you suppose they will keep us here all night?" she asked at last.

"Heaven knows!"

And then again he felt her lips against his ear.

"We must destroy your ticket," she breathed. "Can you find it in the dark?"

"I think so." He fumbled in an inside pocket and drew it out. "Here it is."

Her groping hand found his and took the ticket.

"Now talk to me," she said.

Stewart talked at random, wondering how she intended to destroy the ticket. Once he fancied he heard the sound of soft tearing; and once, when she spoke in answer to a question, her voice was strange and muffled.

"All right!" she whispered at last, and again they sat silent.

How strange a thing was chance, Stewart pondered. Here was he, who, until today, had seen a humdrum and prosaic life stretching before him, cast suddenly into the midst of strange adventures. Here was this girl, whom he had known for only a few hours and yet seemed to have known for years—whom he certainly knew better than he had ever known any other woman!

There was Bloem—he, too, had been cast into the maelstrom of events. Was he outside somewhere, among all those thousands, gazing up at the stars and wondering at fate?

A quick step came along the platform and stopped at the door; there was the snap of a lock and the door swung open.

"You will come out," said a voice in English.

Against the lights of the station Stewart saw outlined the figure of a man in uniform. He rose wearily.

"Come, dear," he said, and helped her to her feet. "It seems we are to go somewhere else." He looked down at the heavy bags. "I can't carry those things all over creation," he said.

"I will attend to that," said the man, and put his fingers to his lips and whistled. Two men came running up. "You will take those bags," he ordered. "Follow me," he added, to Stewart.

They followed him along the platform, crossed the track to another, and came at last to a great empty shed with a low table running along one side. The men placed the bags upon this table and withdrew.

"I shall have to search them," said the officer. "Are they locked?"

He stood in the glare of a lamp hanging from the rafters, and for the first time Stewart saw his face. The man smiled at his start of surprise.

"I see you recognize me," he said. "Yes—I was in your compartment coming from Cologne. We will speak of that later. Are your bags locked?"

"No," said Stewart.

As the officer undid the straps and raised the lids, Stewart looked on listlessly; but his interest was awakened by the extreme care with which the man examined the contents of the bags. He shook out each garment, put his hand in every pocket, examined the linings with his finger-tips, and ripped open one where he detected some unusual thickness—only to discover a piece of reenforcement. He opened and read carefully every letter and paper, and turned the Baedeker page by page to be sure that nothing lay between the leaves. He paused over the satin shoes and stockings, but put them down finally without comment.

At last the bags were empty, and, taking up his knife, the inquisitor proceeded to rip open the linen linings and look under them. Then, with equal care, he returned each article to its place, examining it a second time with the same intent scrutiny.

All this took time, and long before it was over Stewart and his companion had dropped upon a bench which ran along the opposite wall. Stewart was so weary that he began to feel that nothing mat-

tered very much, and he could see that the girl was also very tired.

At last the search was finished, and the bags closed and strapped.

"I should like to see the small bag which *madame* carries on her arm," said the officer.

Without protest the girl held it out to him. He examined its contents with a minuteness almost microscopic. Nothing was too small, too unimportant, to escape the closest attention.

Marveling at this exhibition of German thoroughness, Stewart watched through half-closed eyes, his heart beating a little faster. Would the officer find some clue, some evidence of treachery?

There were some handkerchiefs in the bag, and some small toilet articles; a cake of soap in a case, a box of powder, a small purse containing some gold and silver, a post-card, two or three letters, and some trivial odds and ends such as every woman carries about with her.

The searcher unfolded each of the handkerchiefs and held it against the light. He cut the cake of soap into minute fragments. He emptied the box of powder, and ran an inquiring finger through its contents. He emptied the purse, and looked at every coin it contained.

Then he sat down and slowly and gravely read the post-card and each of the letters. He examined their postmarks. Finally he took one of the closely written sheets, mounted on his chair, and held the sheet close against the chimney of the lamp until it was smoking with the heat, examining it with minute attention, as if he rather expected to make some interesting discovery.

As a finish to his researches he ripped open the lining of the bag and turned it inside out.

"Where did you buy this bag, *madame*?" he asked.

"In Paris, a month ago."

"These handkerchiefs are also French."

"Certainly! French handkerchiefs are the best in the world."

He compressed his lips and looked at her.

"And that is a French hat," he went on.

"Good Heavens!" cried the girl. "One would think I was passing the customs at New York! Certainly it is French. So is my gown—so are my stockings—so is my

underwear. For what else does an American woman come abroad?"

He looked at her shoes. She saw his glance and understood it.

"No; my shoes are American. The French do not know how to make shoes."

"But the slippers are French."

"Which slippers?"

"The ones in your husband's bag."

She turned to Stewart with a laugh.

"Have you been carrying a pair of my slippers all around Europe, Tommy?" she asked. "How did that happen?"

"I don't know. I packed in rather a hurry," answered Stewart sheepishly.

"Where is the remainder of your baggage, *madame*?" asked the officer.

"At Brussels—at least, I hope so. I sent it there direct from Spa, in order to avoid the examination at the frontier."

"Why did not you yourself go direct to Brussels?"

"I wished to see my husband. I had not seen him for more than a fortnight"; and she cast Stewart a fond smile.

The bearded man looked at her keenly for a moment, then took a rapid turn up and down the shed, his brow furrowed in thought.

"I shall have to ask you to disrobe," he said at last. As Stewart started to his feet in hot protest, he added quickly: "I have a woman who will disrobe *madame*."

"But this is an outrage!" protested Stewart, his face crimson. "This lady is my wife—I won't stand by and see her insulted. I warn you that you are making a serious mistake!"

"She shall not be insulted. Besides, it is necessary."

"I don't see it."

"That is for me to decide," said the other bluntly, and he put a whistle to his lips and blew two blasts.

A door at the farther end of the shed opened, and a woman entered. She was a matronly creature with a kind face, and she smiled encouragingly at the shrinking girl.

"*Fräulein*," said the officer in German. "you will take this lady into the office and disrobe her. Bring her clothing to me here—all of it."

Again Stewart started to protest, but the officer silenced him with a gesture.

"It is useless to attempt resistance," he said sharply. "I must do my duty—by force, if necessary."

The girl rose to her feet, evidently reassured by the benevolent appearance of the woman.

"Don't worry, Tommy," she said. "It will be all right. It is no use to argue with these people. There is nothing to do but submit."

"So it seems!" Stewart muttered, and watched her until she disappeared through the door.

"Now, sir," said the officer sharply, "your clothes!"

Crimson with anger, Stewart handed them over piece by piece, saw pockets turned out, linings loosened here and there, the heels of his shoes examined, his fountain pen unscrewed and emptied of its ink. At last he stood naked under the flaring light.

"Well, I hope you are satisfied," he said vindictively.

With a nod the officer handed him back his underwear.

"I will keep these for the moment," he said, indicating the little pile of things taken from the pockets. "You may dress. Your clothes, at least, are American."

As he spoke the woman entered from the farther door with a bundle of clothing in her arms. Stewart turned hastily away, struggling into his trousers as rapidly as he could. Sullenly he laced his shoes and put on his collar, noting wrathfully that it was soiled. He kept his back to the man at the table—he felt that it would be indecent to watch him turning over those intimate articles of apparel.

"You have examined her hair?" he heard the man ask.

"Yes, excellency."

"Very well; you may take these back."

Not until he heard the door close behind her did Stewart turn around. The officer was lighting a cigarette. The carelessness of the act added new fuel to the American's wrath.

"Perhaps you will tell me the meaning of all this?" he demanded. "Why should my wife and I be compelled to submit to these indignities?"

"We are looking for a spy," replied the other imperturbably, turning over the little pile of Stewart's belongings, and at last pushing them toward their owner and opening his passport.

"That passport will tell you that I am not a spy," said Stewart, putting his things

angrily back into his pockets. "That, it seems to me, should be sufficient."

"As far as you are concerned, it is entirely sufficient," said the other. "One can see at a glance that you are an American; but the appearance of *madame* is distinctly French."

"Americans are of every race. I have seen some who look more German than you do."

"That is true; but it so happens that the spy we are looking for is a woman. I cannot tell you more, except that it is imperative that she should not escape."

"And you suspect my wife?" Stewart demanded. "But that is absurd!"

Nevertheless, a little chill ran down his spine as he realized the danger of the situation.

"The fact that she joined you at Aachen was most suspicious," the other pointed out; "especially since she answers in a general way to the woman for whom we are searching. It was also most suspicious that you should have met at the Kölner Hof. That hotel has not a good reputation—it is frequented by too many French. How did you happen to go there?"

"Why," retorted Stewart hotly, "one of your own men recommended it!"

"One of my own men? I do not understand"; and the officer looked at him curiously.

"At least, one of the police. He came to me at the Hotel Continental in Cologne to examine my passport. He asked me where I was going from Cologne, and I told him to Aix-la-Chapelle. He asked at which hotel I was going to stay, and I said I did not know. He thereupon told me that the Kölner Hof was near the station and very clean and comfortable. I certainly found it so."

The officer was listening with peculiar intently.

"Why were you not at the station to meet your wife?" he asked.

"I did not know when she would arrive; the trains were all running irregularly," answered Stewart, prouder of his ability to lie well and quickly than he had ever been of anything else in his life.

"But how did she know at which hotel to find you?" inquired the officer, and negligently flipped the ash from his cigarette.

Stewart distinctly felt his heart turn over as he saw the abyss at his feet. How

would she have known? How *could* she have known? What would he have done if he had really had a wife waiting at Spa? These questions flashed through his head like lightning.

"Why, I telegraphed her, of course," he said; "and to make assurance doubly sure, I sent her a post-card."

His heart fell again, for he realized that the police had only to wire to Cologne to prove that no such message had been filed there. But the officer tossed away his cigarette with a little gesture of satisfaction.

"It was well you took the latter precaution, Mr. Stewart," he said, and Stewart noticed that there was a subtle change in his tone—it was less cold, more friendly. "The wires were closed last night to any but official business, and your message could not possibly have got through. I am surprised that the operators at Cologne accepted it."

"I gave it to the porter at the hotel," Stewart explained. "Perhaps they didn't accept it, and he kept the money."

"That may be. But your post-card got through, as you no doubt know."

"Really," stammered Stewart, wondering desperately if this was another trap, "I didn't know—I didn't think to ask—"

"Luckily for you, *madame* brought it with her in her little hand-bag," explained the other. "I must admit that it offers a convincing confirmation of your story—the more convincing, perhaps, since you seem surprised that she brought it along. Ah, here she is now"; and he rose as the door opened and the girl came in. "Will you not sit down, *madame*?" he went on courteously. "I pray that both of you will accept my sincere apologies for the inconvenience I have caused you. Believe me, it was one of war's necessities."

The girl glanced at the speaker curiously, his tone was so warm, so full of friendship; then she glanced at Stewart.

Catching that glance, Stewart was suddenly conscious that his mouth was open, his eyes staring, and his whole attitude that of a man struck dumb by astonishment. Hastily he bent over to tie a shoestring.

Really, he told himself, he could not be blamed for being disconcerted. Anybody would be disconcerted to be told suddenly that his most desperate lie was true! But how could it be true? How could there

be any such post-card as the German had described? Was it just another trap?

"We understand, of course, that you were merely doing your duty," the girl's voice was saying. "What seemed unfair was that we should be the victims. Do I understand that—that you no longer suspect us?"

"Absolutely not; and I apologize for my suspicions."

"Then we are at liberty to proceed?"

"You cannot, in any event, proceed to-night. I will pass you in the morning. I hope you will not think that any discourtesy was intended to you as Americans. Germany is most anxious to retain the good-will of America. It will mean much to us in this struggle."

"Most Americans are rather sentimental over Alsace-Lorraine," said Stewart, who had recovered his composure.

He fished for a cigar, and offered one to the officer, who accepted it with a bow of thanks.

"That is because they do not understand," said the other quickly. "Alsace-Lorraine belongs of right to Germany."

"But haven't you been rather harsh with it?"

"No harsher than was necessary. Parts of it have seethed with treason. The spy for whom we are searching comes from Strassburg."

Stewart started at the words; but the girl threw back her head and laughed.

"So you took us for spies!" she cried. "What a tale to tell, Tommy, when we get home!"

"There is but one spy, *madame*," said the officer; "a woman. She has lived in Strassburg for many years, and has never been suspected. She was on intimate terms with many of our officers; they felt themselves safe in talking freely to her. More than that, at the last moment she succeeded in getting certain documents. Then she was suspected—she fled—and thus far she has not been captured. But it will be impossible for her to pass the frontier. A resident of Strassburg who knows her is to be stationed at every post, and no woman will be permitted to pass until he has seen her. The man to be posted here will arrive in an hour. As a final precaution, *madame*," he added, smiling, "and because my orders are most precise and stringent, I shall ask you and your husband to remain here at Herbes-

thal until morning. As I have said, you could not in any event go on to-night, for the frontier is closed. In the morning, as a matter of formality, I must ask my man from Strassburg to look at you. I will then provide you with a safe-conduct, and see that every possible facility is given you to get safely across the frontier."

"Thank you," she said; "you are very kind. That is why you are keeping all those people cooped up in the station?"

"Yes, *madame*. They cannot pass until my man has seen them."

"But you are not searching them?"

"No; with most of them the detention is a mere matter of obeying orders—one can tell their nationality at a glance. But to look at you, *madame*, I should never have supposed you to be an American—I should have supposed you to be French."

"My grandmother was French," explained the girl composedly, "and I am said to resemble her very closely. I may also warn you that my sympathies are French."

The officer shrugged his shoulders with a smile.

"That is a great misfortune. Perhaps when you see how our army fights we may claim some of your sympathy—or, at least, your admiration."

"It will fight well, then?"

"Most assuredly. The entire schedule has been made out by our General Staff. This is the 1st of August. On the 5th we shall capture Lille, and on the 11th we shall enter Paris. On the evening of the 12th the Kaiser will dine the General Staff at the Ritz."

Stewart stared in astonishment.

"But you are not in earnest!" he protested.

"Thoroughly in earnest. We know where we shall be at every hour."

"But to reach Lille," said the girl, "it will be necessary to cross Belgium!"

"Undoubtedly."

"It seems to me that I read somewhere—perhaps in Baedeker—that the neutrality of Belgium had been guaranteed by all the great powers."

"So it has—but all that is merely a scrap of paper. The first blast of war blows it away. It is necessary for us to invade France from the north. Therefore, regretfully, but none the less firmly, we warn Belgium to stand aside."

"Will she stand aside?"

The officer shrugged his shoulders. "She must, or risk annihilation. She will not dare oppose us."

Stewart felt a little shiver of disgust sweep over him. So this was the German soldier's attitude! Treaties, solemn agreements, all these were "merely scraps of paper," not worth considering! He felt that he could bear to talk no longer, and rose suddenly to his feet.

"What are we going to do to-night?" he asked. "We shall not have to sit here in this shed, surely?"

"Certainly not"; and the officer rose, too. "I have secured a lodging for you with the woman who searched *madame*. You will find it clean and comfortable, though by no means luxurious."

"That is very kind of you," said Stewart, with a memory of the rabble he had seen crowded into the waiting-room. He looked at his luggage. "I hope it isn't far," he added. "I've carried those bags about a thousand miles to-day."

"It is only a step—but I will have a man carry your bags. Here is your passport, sir, and again let me assure you of my regret. You also, *madame*!"

Three minutes later they were walking down the platform before the pleasant-faced woman, who babbled away amiably in German, while a porter followed with the bags. As they passed the station they could see that it was still jammed with a motley crowd, while a guard of soldiers thrown around it prevented any one leaving or entering.

"How fortunate that we have escaped that!" said Stewart. "Even at the price of being searched!"

"This way, sir," said the woman, in German, and motioned off into the darkness to the right.

They made their way across a network of tracks, which seemed to Stewart strangely complicated and extensive for a small frontier station, and then emerged into a narrow, crooked street, bordered by mean little houses. In front of one of these the woman stopped, and unlocked the door with an enormous key.

The porter set the bags inside, received his tip, and withdrew, while their hostess struck a match and lighted a candle, disclosing a narrow hall running from the front door back through the house.

"You will sleep here, sir," she said, and opened a door to the left.

They stepped through, in obedience to her gesture, and found themselves in a fair-sized room, sparsely furnished, and a little musty from disuse, but evidently clean. Their hostess hastened to open the window and to light another candle. Then she brought in Stewart's bags.

"You will find water there," and she pointed to the pitcher on the wash-stand. "I cannot give you hot water to-night—there is no fire. Will these towels be sufficient? Yes? Is there anything else? No? Then good night, sir, and you, *madame*."

"Good night," they answered.

For a moment after the door closed they stood staring at it as if hypnotized. Then the girl stepped to the window and drew the blind. As she turned back into the room Stewart saw that her face was livid. His eyes asked the question which he did not dare speak aloud.

She drew him back into the corner and put her lips close against his ear.

"There is a guard outside," she whispered. "We must be very careful. We are prisoners still!"

As Stewart stood staring she took off her hat and tossed it on a chair.

"How tired I am!" she said, yawning heavily.

Turning back to the window, she began to take down her hair.

CHAPTER VIII

PRESTO, CHANGE!

THE vision of that dark hair rippling down as she drew out pin after pin held Stewart entranced. But what was it she purposed to do? Surely—

"If you are going to wash, you'd better do it, Tommy," she said calmly. "I will be wanting to in a minute."

Mechanically Stewart slipped out of his coat, took off his collar, pulled up his sleeves, and fell to. Again he was obsessed by a feeling of unreality. It couldn't be true—all this—

"I wish you'd hurry, Tommy," said a voice behind him. "I'm waiting for you to unhook my bodice."

Stewart started round as if stung by an adder. His companion's hair fell in beautiful dark waves about her shoulders, and he could see that her bodice was loosened.

"There are two hooks I can't reach," she said in the most matter-of-fact tone.

"I should think you would know that by this time!"

"Oh, so it's *that* bodice!" said Stewart. He dried his hands vigorously, resolved to play the game to the end, whatever it might be. "All right!"

She turned her back toward him, and he began gingerly searching for the hooks.

"Come a little this way," she said; "you can see better."

Glancing up, Stewart suddenly understood. They were standing in such a position that their shadows fell upon the curtain. The comedy was being played for the benefit of the guard in the street outside.

The discovery that it *was* a comedy gave back to Stewart all his aplomb, and he found the hooks and disengaged them with a celerity which no real husband could have improved upon.

"There!" he said. "Though why any woman should wear a gown so fashioned that she can neither dress nor undress herself passes my comprehension. Why not put the hooks in front?"

"And spoil the effect? Impossible! The hooks must be in the back."

Still standing before the window, she slowly drew her bodice off.

Stewart had seen the arms of many women, but, he told himself, never a pair so rounded and graceful as those at this moment disclosed to him. Admirable, too, was the way in which the head was set upon the lovely neck, and the way the neck itself merged into the shoulders—the masterpiece of a great artist, so he told himself.

"I wonder if there is a shutter to that window!" she said suddenly, and turned toward it. "If there is, you had better close it. Somebody might pass. Besides, I don't like to sleep on the ground floor of a strange house in a strange town, with an open window."

"I'll see," said Stewart. Pulling back the curtain, he stuck out his head. "Yes, there's a shutter—a heavy wooden one"; and he pulled it shut and pushed its bolt into place. "There; now you're safe!"

She motioned him quickly to lower the window, and this he did as noiselessly as possible.

"Was there any one outside?" she asked in a low tone.

He shook his head. The narrow street upon which the window opened had

seemed quite deserted, but the shadows were very deep.

"I wish you'd open the bags, Tommy," she said in her natural voice. "I suppose I shall have to improvise a night-dress of some sort."

Although he knew quite well that the words had been uttered for foreign consumption, as it were, Stewart found that his fingers were trembling as he undid the straps and threw back the lids, for he was quite unable to guess what would be the end of this strange adventure, or to what desperate steps the pressure of circumstances might lead.

"There you are," he said, and sat down and watched her.

She knelt on the floor before the bags and turned over their contents thoughtfully, laying to one side a soft outing-shirt, a traveling-cap, a lounging-coat, a pipe and pouch of tobacco, a handful of cigars, a pair of trousers, three handkerchiefs, a pair of scissors. She paused for a long time over a pair of Stewart's shoes, but finally put them back with a shake of the head.

"No," said Stewart, "I agree with you. Shoes are not necessary to a sleeping costume; no more is a pipe, either."

She laughed.

"You will find that the pipe is very necessary," she said.

Rising briskly, she stepped to the washstand and gave face and hands and arms a scrubbing so vigorous that she emerged, as it seemed to Stewart, more radiant than ever. Then she glanced into the pitcher with an exclamation of dismay.

"There! I have used all the water! I wonder if our landlady is up!"

Catching up the pitcher, she crossed rapidly to the door and opened it. There was no one there, and Stewart, following with the candle, saw that the hall was empty. They stood for a moment listening, but not a sound disturbed the stillness of the house.

The girl motioned him back into the room and closed the door softly. Then, replacing the pitcher gently, she took up a pile of Stewart's socks and stuffed them tightly under the door. Finally she set a chair snugly against it—for there was no lock—and turned to Stewart with a little sigh of relief.

"There," she said in a low tone; "nobody can see our light or overhear us, if

we are careful. Perhaps they do not really suspect us, but we must take no chances. What is the time?"

Stewart glanced at his watch.

"It is almost midnight."

"There is no time to lose. We must make our plans. Sit here beside me." She sat down in one corner against the wall. "We mustn't waste our candle," she added. "Bring it with you, and we will blow it out until we need it again."

Stewart sat down beside her. Placing the candle on the floor, he leaned forward and blew it out.

For a moment they sat so, quite still, then Stewart felt a hand touch his. He seized it and held it close.

"I am very unhappy, my friend," she said softly, "to have involved you in all this."

"Why, I am having the time of my life!" Stewart protested.

"If I had foreseen what was to happen," she went on, "I should never have asked you to assist me. I would have found some other way."

"Then I'm glad you didn't foresee it. Why—why, I was never so happy in my life!"

"It is good of you to say so, but you must not involve yourself further."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I am in great danger. It is absolutely necessary that I should escape from this place. I cannot remain here till morning. I cannot face that inspection. I should be denounced."

"Yes," agreed Stewart; "that's clear enough."

"Well, I will escape alone. When the police come for us they will find only you."

"And will probably back me against a wall and shoot me out of hand!"

"Oh, no; they will be rough and angry, but they will not dare to harm you. They know that you are an American—they cannot possibly suspect you of being a spy. You can prove the truth of all your statements."

"Not quite all," Stewart corrected.

"Of your statements, at least, so far as they concern yourself."

"Yes, but I expect I should have no small difficulty in explaining my connection with you."

"Oh, no," said the girl in a low voice; "that can be easily explained."

"How?"

"You will say," she answered, her voice lower still, "that you met me at the Kölner Hof, that I made advances, that you thought me rather attractive, and that I had agreed to accompany you for a week or two. You can say that it was I who suggested altering your passport, that you saw no harm in it, and that you knew absolutely nothing about me except that I—I was a—a loose woman."

Stewart's lips were trembling so that it was a moment before he could control his voice.

"And do you really think I would say that, little comrade?" he asked hoarsely. "Do you really think anything on earth could compel me to say that?"

He heard the quick intake of her breath. She raised his hand to her cheek and he felt the hot tears upon it.

"Don't you understand," he went on earnestly, "that we are in this together to the end—the very end? I know I'm not of much use; but I am not such a coward as you seem to think me, and—"

She stopped him with a quick pressure of the fingers.

"Don't!" she breathed. "You are cruel!"

"Not half so cruel as you were a moment ago," he retorted.

"Forgive me, my friend," she pleaded, and moved a little nearer. "I did not know—I am but a girl—I thought perhaps you would wish to be rid of me."

"I don't want ever to be rid of you," began Stewart brokenly, drawing her closer. "I don't want ever—"

She yielded for an instant to his arm; for the fraction of an instant her head was upon his breast; then she drew herself away and silenced him with a tap upon the lips.

"Not now!" she said, and her voice, too, was hoarse. "All we must think of now is to escape. Afterward, perhaps—"

"I shall hold you to that!" said Stewart, and released her.

But again for an instant she bent close.

"You are a good man," she whispered.

"Oh, no!" Stewart protested, though he was shaken by the words. "Just an ordinary fellow."

And then he suddenly found himself unable to go on. There was a moment's silence. When he spoke again he had regained his self-control.

"Have you a plan?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, and drew a quick breath, as of one shaking away some weakness. "The first part is that you should sit quite still until I tell you to light the candle."

"But what—"

"A good soldier does not ask questions."

"All right, general!" said Stewart.

He settled back against the wall, completely, ineffably happy. Never before, he told himself, had he known what happiness was; never before had the mere joy of living run through his veins as it was doing now. Little comrade! But what was she doing?

He could hear her moving softly about the room; he could hear the rustle of what he took to be the bedclothes; then the bed creaked as she sat down upon it.

What was she doing? Why should she work in the dark, alone, without asking him to help? Was it because he could not help—was of so little use—

"You may light the candle now, my friend," she said in a low voice.

Stewart had a match ready—had had it ready for long minutes!—and in a trice the wick was alight and the flame shot up clear and steady.

After one glance he sprang to his feet in amazement, for there before him stood a youth—the handsomest he had ever seen—*Peter Pan* come to earth again—his hand at the vizor of his traveling-cap in mock salute.

"Well!" said Stewart, after a moment of amazed and delighted silence. "I believe you are a witch. Let me look at you!"

The face upturned to his flamed crimson at the wonder and admiration in his eyes, but the dimple was sparkling at the corner of her mouth as she turned obediently before him and stepped slowly across the room. There is at the heart of every woman, however virginal and innocent, a subtle delight in knowing that men find her beautiful, and there could be no question of what Stewart thought at this moment.

At last she came to a stop facing him.

"Well?" she asked. "Shall I do?"

"Will you do?" Stewart echoed, and Meredith's phrase recurred to him—"a nymph in porcelain"—how perfectly it described her! "You are entirely, absolutely, impeccably—oh, I haven't adjectives enough!"

"But the clothes," she said, and looked doubtfully down at them. "Do I look like a boy?"

"Not in the least!" he answered promptly.

Her face fell.

"But then—"

"Perhaps it is just because I know you're not one," he reassured her. "Let me see if I can improve matters. The trousers are too large, especially about the waist. They seem in danger of—h-m!" She was clutching them desperately with one hand. "We'll make another hole in that belt about three inches back." He got out his knife and suited the action to the word. "There—that's better—you can let go of them now. And we'll turn up the legs about four inches—no, we'd better cut them off." He set the candle on the floor, picked up the scissors, and carefully trimmed each leg. "But those feet are ridiculous," he added with mock severity. "No real boy ever had feet like that!"

For a moment she stared down at them hopelessly.

"They will seem larger when I get them covered with mud," she pointed out. "I thought of putting on a pair of your shoes, but gave it up, for I am afraid I could not travel very far in them. Luckily, these are very strong."

He smiled skeptically, but had to agree with her that his shoes were impossible.

"There is one other thing." She lifted her cap and let her tucked-up hair fall about her shoulders. "This must be cut off."

"Oh, no!" protested Stewart, drawing back in horror. "That would be desecration—why, it's the most beautiful hair in the world!"

"Nonsense! In any event, it will grow again."

"Why not just tie it up under your cap?"

But she shook her head.

"No, it must come off. I might lose the cap—you see, it is too large—and my hair would betray us. Cut it off, my friend—be quick!"

She was right, of course. With a heavy heart Stewart snipped away the long tresses, and then trimmed the hair as well as he was able—which was very badly indeed. Finally he parted it rakishly on one side—and only by a supreme effort re-

strained himself from taking her in his arms and kissing her.

"Really," he said, "you're so ridiculously lovely that I'm in great danger of violating our treaty. I warn you it's extremely dangerous to look at me like that!"

She lowered her eyes instantly, but she could not restrain the dimple. Fortunately, in the shadow, Stewart could not see it.

"We must make my clothing into a bundle," she said sedately. "I may need it again. Besides, these people must not suspect that I have gone away disguised like this. That will give us a great advantage. Yes, gather up the hair, and we will take it, too—it would betray us. Put the cigars in your pocket. I will take the pipe and tobacco."

"Do you expect to smoke? I warn you that that pipe is a seasoned one."

"I may risk a puff or two. I have been told there is no passport like a pipe of tobacco. No, don't shut the bags. Leave them open as if we had fled hurriedly. And," she added, crimsoning a little, "I think it would be well to disarrange the bed."

Stewart flung back the covers and rolled upon it, while his companion cast a last look about the room. Then she picked up her little bag and took out the two letters.

"Which pocket of a man's clothes is safest?" she asked.

"The inside coat-pocket. There are two inside pockets in the coat you have on. One of them has a flap which buttons down. Nothing could get out of it."

She started to place the letters in the pocket, but hesitated, looking at him searchingly. She came close to him and spoke in the merest breath.

"My friend," she said, "I am going to trust you with a great secret. The information I carry is in these letters, apparently so innocent. If anything should happen to me—"

"Nothing is going to happen to you," broke in Stewart roughly. "That is what I am for!"

"I know—and yet something may. If anything should, promise me that you will take these letters from my pocket and by every means in your power seek to place them in the hands of General Joffre."

"General Joffre?" repeated Stewart. "Who is he?"

"He is the French commander-in-chief."

"But what chance would I have of reaching him? I should merely be laughed at if I asked to see him."

"Not if you asked in the right way." Again she hesitated. Then she pressed still closer. "Listen. I have no right to tell you what I am about to tell you, and yet I must. Do you remember, at Aix, I looked at you like this?"

She caught her lower lip for an instant between the thumb and little finger of her left hand.

"Yes, I remember; and you burst into tears immediately afterward."

"That was because you did not understand. If, in answer, you had passed your left hand across your eyes, I should have said, in French, 'Have we not met before?' If you had replied, 'In Berlin, on the 22nd,' I should have known that you were one of ours. Those passwords will take you to General Joffre himself."

"Let us repeat them," Stewart suggested. In a moment he knew them thoroughly. "That's right!" he said.

"You consent, then?" she asked eagerly.

"To assist you in every way possible—yes."

"To leave me, if I am not able to go on; to take the letters and press on alone," she insisted, her eyes shining. "Promise me, my friend!"

"I shall have to be governed by circumstances," said Stewart cautiously. "If that seems the best thing to do, why, I'll do it, of course. But I warn you that this enterprise would soon go to pieces if it had no better wits than mine behind it. Why, in the few minutes they were searching you back there at the station I nearly walked straight into a trap—and with my eyes wide open, too—at the very moment when I was proudly thinking what a clever fellow I was!"

"What was the trap?" she asked quickly.

"I was talking to that officer, and babbled out the story of how I came to go to the Kölner Hof. He seemed surprised that a member of the police should have recommended it—which seems strange to me, too," he added, "now that I think of it. Then he asked me suddenly how you knew I was there."

"Yes, yes; and what did you say?"

"I didn't say anything for a minute—I felt as if I was falling out of an air-ship. But after I had fallen about a mile I man-

aged to say that I had sent you a telegram and also a post-card."

"How lucky!" breathed the girl. "How clever of you!"

"Clever? Was it? But that shock was nothing to the jolt I got the next minute, when he told me that you had brought the post-card along in your bag! It was a good thing you came in just then, or he would have seen by the way I stared at him that the whole story was a lie."

"I should have told you of the post-card," she said, with a gesture of annoyance. "It is often just some such tiny oversight that wrecks a whole plan. One tries to foresee everything—to provide for everything—and then some little, little detail goes wrong, and the whole structure comes tumbling down. It was chance that saved us; and in affairs of this sort, nothing must be left to chance. If we had failed, it would have been my fault."

"But how could there have been a post-card?" demanded Stewart. "I should like to see it."

Smiling, yet with a certain look of anxiety, she stepped to her bag, took out the post-card, and handed it to him. On one side was a picture of the cathedral at Cologne; on the other, the address and the message:

MY DEAR MARY:

Do not forget that it is to-morrow, Saturday, you are to meet me at Aix-la-Chapelle, from where we will go on to Brussels together, as we have planned. If I should miss you at the train, you will find me at a hotel called the Kölner Hof, not far from the station. But I shall try to meet you, for I can scarcely wait to see you again.

Lovingly,

BRADFORD STEWART.

Stewart read this remarkable message, and stood staring at it as though unable to believe his eyes.

"But it is in my handwriting!" he protested. "At least, a fairly good imitation of it—and the signature is mine to a dot!"

"The signature was all we had to go by," she explained. "Your handwriting had to be inferred from that."

"But where did you get my signature? Oh, from that blank I filled up at Aix, I suppose."

"No," she said: "you gave the signature to the man who examined your passport on the terrace of the Hotel Conti-

mental at Cologne, and who recommended you to the Kölner Hof. He also was one of ours."

Stewart was looking at her steadily.

"Then in that case," he said, and his face was very stern, "it was I, and no one else, whom you expected to meet at the Kölner Hof!"

"Yes," she answered, her face convulsed, but meeting his gaze unwaveringly. "And all that followed—the tears, the dismay—was make-believe?"

"Yes. I cannot lie to you, my friend."

Stewart passed an unsteady hand before his eyes. It seemed that something had suddenly burst within him—some dream, some vision.

"So I was deliberately used!" he began hoarsely; but she stopped him, her hand upon his arm.

"Do not speak in that tone," she pleaded, her face wrung with anguish. "Do not look at me like that. I did not know—I had never seen you—it was not my plan. We were face to face with failure—we were desperate—there seemed no other way." She stopped, shuddering slightly, and drew away from him. "At least you will say good-by," she said softly.

Dazedly Stewart looked at her—at her eyes dark with sadness, at her face suddenly so white. She was standing near the window, her hand upon the blind.

"Good-by, my friend," she repeated. "You have been very good to me!"

For an instant longer he stood staring. Then he sprang to her and seized her.

"Do you mean that you are going to leave me?" he demanded almost roughly.

"Surely that it what you wish?"

"No! No! What do I care—what does it matter?" The words were pouring incoherently from his trembling lips. "I understand—you were desperate—you didn't know me; even if you had, it would have made no difference. Oh, I am a fool!"

She shivered a little; then she drew away, looking at him.

"You mean," she stammered; "you mean that you still—that you still—"

"Little comrade!" he said, and held out his arms.

She lifted her eyes to his—wavered toward him—

"Halt!" cried a voice just outside the window.

An instant later there came a heavy knock on the door of the house.

CHAPTER IX

THE FRONTIER

THE knocking seemed to shake the house, so violent it was, so insistent; and Stewart, petrified, stood staring numbly. But his companion was quicker than he. In an instant she had run to the light and blown it out. Then she was back at his side.

"The moment they are in the house," she said, "raise the window as silently as you can, and unbolt the shutter."

And then she was gone again, and he could hear her moving about near the door.

Again the knocking came, louder than before. It could mean only one thing, Stewart told himself—their ruse had been discovered, and a party of soldiers had come to arrest them.

He drew a quick breath. What then? He closed his eyes dizzily—what had she said? "A file of soldiers in front, a wall behind!" But that should never be! They must kill him first! He sickened as he realized how puny he was, how impotent.

He heard shuffling footsteps approach along the hall, and a glimmer of light showed beneath the door. For an instant Stewart stared at it, uncomprehending; then he smiled to himself. The girl, quicker-witted than he, had pulled away the things that had been stuffed there.

"Who is it?" called the voice of their landlady.

"It is I, *fräulein*," answered the voice of the police agent. "Pray open the door quickly!"

A key rattled in a lock, the door was opened, and the party stepped inside.

Stewart, at the window, raised the sash and pulled back the bolt. He could hear the confused murmur of voices—men's voices. Then he felt a warm hand in his and lips at his ear.

"It is the person from Strassburg," she breathed. "He has been brought here for the night. There is no danger. Bolt the shutter again—but softly."

She was gone again, and Stewart, with a deep breath that was almost a sob, thrust home the bolt. The voices were clearer now—or perhaps it was the singing of his

blood that was stilled—and he could hear their words.

"You will give this gentleman a room," said the secret agent.

"Yes, excellency."

"How are your other guests?"

"I have heard nothing from them, excellency, since they retired."

Suddenly Stewart felt his hat lifted from his head and a hand rumpling his hair.

"Take off your coat," whispered a voice. "Open the door a little and demand less noise. Say that I am asleep!"

It was a call to battle, and Stewart felt his nerves stiffen. Without a word he threw off his coat and tore off his collar. Then he moved away the chair from before the door, opened it, and put one eye to the crack. There were five people in the hall—the woman, the secret agent, two soldiers, and a man in civilian attire.

"What on earth is the matter out there?" he demanded.

It did his heart good to see how they jumped at the sound of his voice.

"Your pardon, Mr. Stewart," said the officer, stepping toward him. "I hope we have not disturbed you."

"Disturbed me? Why, I thought you were knocking the house down!"

"The *fräulein* is a heavy sleeper," the other explained with a smile. "You will present my apologies to *madame*."

"My wife is so weary that even this has not awakened her, but I hope—"

"What is it, Tommy?" asked a sleepy voice from the darkness behind him. "Who are you talking to out there?"

"Your pardon, *madame*," said the officer, raising his voice, and doubtless finding a certain piquancy in the situation. "You shall not be disturbed again—I promise it," and he signed for his men to withdraw.

"Good night, sir."

"Good night!" answered Stewart, and shut the door.

He was so shaken with mirth that he scarcely heard the outer door close. Then he staggered to the bed and collapsed upon it.

"Oh, little comrade!" he gasped. "Little comrade!"

He buried his head in the clothes to choke back the shouts of laughter which rose in his throat.

"Hush! Hush!" she warned him, her hand on his shoulder. "Get your coat and hat. Be quick!"

The search for those articles of attire sobered him. He had never before realized how large a small room may become in the dark. His coat he found in one corner; his hat miles away in another. His collar and tie seemed to have disappeared utterly, and he was about to abandon them to their fate when his hand came into contact with them under the bed.

He felt utterly exhausted and sat on the floor panting for breath. Somebody stumbled against him.

"Where have you been?" her voice demanded impatiently. "What have you been doing?"

"I have been around the world," said Stewart.

Her hand found his shoulder and shook it viciously.

"Is this a time for jesting? Come!"

Stewart got heavily to his feet, grasping her hand.

"Really," he said, "I'm not jesting—"

"Hush!" she cautioned.

Suddenly Stewart saw her silhouetted against the window, and knew that it was open. Then he saw her peer cautiously out, swing one leg over the sill, and let herself down outside.

"Careful!" she whispered.

In a moment he was standing beside her in the narrow street. She caught his hand and led him away close in the shadow of the wall.

The night air and the movement revived him somewhat, and by a desperate effort of will he managed to walk without stumbling; but he was still deadly tired. He knew that he was suffering from the reaction from the manifold adventures and excitements of the day, more especially the reaction from despair to hope during the last half-hour, and he tried his best to shake it off. He could not but marvel at the endurance of this slender girl who had borne so much more than he.

She went straight on along the narrow street, keeping in the shadow of the houses, pausing now and then to listen to some distant sound, and once hastily drawing him deep into the shadow of a door as a patrol passed along a cross street.

The houses suddenly ceased, and Stewart saw that they were upon a white road running straight away between level fields. Overhead the bright stars shone as calmly and peacefully as if there were no such thing as war in the whole universe. Look-

ing up at them, Stewart felt himself tranquilized and strengthened.

"And now what?" he asked. "I warn you that I shall go to sleep on my feet before long!"

"We mustn't stop until we get across the frontier. It can't be more than half a mile."

Half a mile seemed an eternity to Stewart at that moment; besides, which way should they go?

"Yonder is the Dipper," said the girl, looking up at the heavens. "All I know of astronomy is that a line drawn through the two stars of the bowl points to the north star. So that insignificant little star up there must be the north star. Now, what is the old formula—if you stand with your face to the north—"

"Your right hand will be toward the east and your left toward the west," prompted Stewart.

"So the frontier is to our left. Come!"

She released his hand, leaped the ditch at the side of the road, and set off westward across a rough field. Stewart stumbled after her.

Presently his extreme exhaustion passed, and was followed by a sort of nervous exhilaration which enabled him easily to keep up with her. They climbed a wall, struggled through a strip of woodland—Stewart had never before realized how difficult it is to go through woods at night—passed close to a house, where a barking dog sent panic terror through them, and came at last to a road running westward, toward Belgium and safety.

"We must be past the frontier," said Stewart at last. "We have come at least two or three miles."

"Let us be sure," gasped the girl. "Let us take no chances," and she pressed on.

Stewart reflected uneasily that they had encountered no outposts, and surely there would be outposts at the frontier to maintain its neutrality and intercept stragglers. But perhaps that would be only on the main traveled roads; or perhaps the outposts were not yet in place; or perhaps they might run into one at any moment. He looked forward apprehensively, but the road lay white and empty under the stars.

Suddenly the girl stumbled and nearly fell. His arm was about her in an instant. He could feel how her body drooped against him in utter weariness. She had reached the end of her strength.

"Come," he said; "we must rest."

He led her, unresisting, to the side of the road. They sat down side by side, with their backs against the wall, and her head fell upon his shoulder. By a supreme effort she roused herself.

"We cannot stay here!" she protested.

"No," Stewart agreed. "Do you think you can climb this wall? We may find cover on the other side."

"Of course I can." She tried to rise, but Stewart had to assist her. "I don't know what's the matter," she panted, as she clung to him.

"It's the reaction," said Stewart. "It was bound to come, sooner or later. I had my attack back there on the road. Now I'm going to lift you on top of the wall."

She threw one leg over it and sat astride.

"Oh, I've dropped the bundle!" she said.

"Have you been carrying it all this time?" Stewart demanded.

"Why, of course. It weighs nothing."

Groping along the base of the wall, Stewart found it, tucked it under his arm, scrambled over, and lifted her down.

"Now, forward!" he said.

At the second step they were in a field of grain as high as their waists. They could feel its stalks brushing against them, twining about their feet; they could see its yellow expanse stretching far away into the night.

"Splendid!" said Stewart. "There could be no better cover!" He led her forward into it. "Now," he added, at the end of five minutes, "stand where you are till I get things ready for you." With his knife he cut down great handfuls of the grain, and piled them upon the ground. "There's your bed," he said, placing the bundle of clothing at one end of it; "and there's your pillow."

She sat down with a sigh of relief.

"Oh, how heavenly!"

"You can go to sleep without fear. No one can discover us here, unless they stumble right over us. Good night!"

"But you?"

"Oh, I am going to sleep, too. I'll make myself a bed just over here."

"Good night, my friend!" she said softly.

Stewart turned away, and piled his own bed at a little distance. It would have been safer, perhaps, if they had slept side by side; but there was about her something delicate and virginal which kept him at a

distance—and yet held him, too, bound him powerfully, led him captive.

He lay down and gazed up at the bright stars and thought of her—of her beauty, of her fire, of her indomitable youth, of her clear-eyed innocence. What was her story? Where were her people, that they should permit her to take such desperate risks? Why had this great mission been confided to her—to a girl, so young, so inexperienced?

And yet the choice had evidently been a wise one. She had proved herself worthy of the trust. No one could have been quicker-witted, more ready of resource.

Well, the worst of it was over. They were safe out of Germany. It would now be merely a question of reaching a farmhouse, of hiring a wagon, of driving to the nearest station. But at this point Stewart stirred uneasily. That would mean goodbye!

Why should he go to Brussels? Why not turn south with her to France?

Sleep came to him as he was asking himself this question for the twentieth time.

It was full day when he awoke. He looked about for a minute at the yellow grain, heavy-headed and ready for the harvest, before he remembered where he was. Then he rubbed his eyes and looked again. The wheat-field, certainly—that was all right; but what was that insistent murmur which filled his ears, which never ceased? He sat hastily erect and started to his feet; then as hastily dropped to his knees again and peered cautiously above the grain.

Along the road, as far in either direction as the eye could see, passed a mighty multitude, marching steadily westward. Stewart's heart beat faster as he ran his eyes over that great host—thousands and tens of thousands, clad in blue-gray, each with his rifle and blanket-roll, his equipment complete to the smallest detail—the German army setting forth for war!

Oh, wonderful, astounding, stupendous!—a myriad of men, moving as one man, obeying one man's bidding, marching out to kill and to be killed—and marching willingly, even eagerly.

The bright morning, the sense of high adventure, the exhilaration of marching elbow to elbow with thousands—yes, and love of country, the thought that they were fighting for their fatherland—all these uplifted the heart and made the eye sparkle.

There were jests and rough laughter; there were snatches of song—sometimes a thousand voices were shouting "*Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles!*"—shouting it in a slow and solemn unison, marked by the tramp, tramp of their feet.

Suddenly Stewart remembered his companion. Parting the wheat, he crawled hastily through into the little amphitheater where he had made her bed. She was still asleep, her head pillowed on the bundle of clothing, one arm above her head, shielding her eyes from the light. Stewart sat softly down beside her, his heart very tender, resolved not to awaken her.

A sudden blare of bugles shrilled from the road, and from far off rose a roar of cheering, sweeping nearer and nearer.

The girl stirred, turned uneasily, opened her eyes, stared up at him for a moment, and then sat hastily erect.

"What is it?" she asked.

"The German army is advancing."

"Yes—but the cheering?"

"I don't know."

Side by side, they peered out above the grain. A heavy motor-car was advancing rapidly from the east along the road, the troops moving aside to let it pass, and cheering—cheering, as if they were mad.

Inside the car were three men, but the one who acknowledged the salutes of the officers as he passed was a tall, slender young fellow in a long, gray coat, with a general's stars upon his shoulders. His face was radiant, and he saluted and saluted, and once or twice rose to his feet and pointed westward.

"The crown prince!" said the girl, and watched in heavy silence until the motor passed from sight and the host took up its steady march again. "Ah, well, he at least has realized his ambition—to lead an army against France!"

"It seems to be a devoted army," Stewart remarked. "I never heard such cheering."

"It is a splendid army." The girl swept her eyes back and forth over the marching host. "France will have no easy task—but she is fighting for her life, and she will win!"

"I hope so," Stewart agreed.

Nevertheless, his heart fell as he looked at these marching men, sweeping on endlessly, irresistibly, in a torrent which seemed powerful enough to engulf every-

thing in its path. He had never seen an army, even a small one, and this mighty host unnerved and even intimidated him.

"There is one thing certain," he said at last, "and that is that our adventures are not yet over. With our flight discovered, and Germans in front of us and behind us, and probably on either side of us, our position is still decidedly awkward. I suppose their outposts are somewhere ahead."

"Yes, I suppose so," she agreed.

"Along the Meuse, perhaps."

"And I am most awfully hungry. Aren't you?"

"Yes, I am."

"I've heard that whole wheat makes a delicious breakfast dish," said Stewart, who felt unaccountably down-hearted and was determined not to show it. "Shall we try some?"

She nodded, smiling, then turned back to watch the Germans, who seemed to fascinate her. Stewart broke off the heads of the yellow grain, rubbed them out between his hands, blew away the chaff, and poured the fat kernels into her outstretched palm. Then he rubbed out a mouthful for himself.

"But that they should invade Belgium!" she said, half to herself. "Did you hear what that man said last night—that a treaty was merely a scrap of paper?"

"Yes," nodded Stewart, "and it disgusted me."

"But of course France has expected it—she has prepared for it," went on the girl. "She will not be taken by surprise."

"You don't think, then, that the Kaiser will dine in Paris on the 12th?"

"Nonsense—that is only an empty boast!"

"Well, I hope so," said Stewart. "And wherever he dines, I hope he has something more appetizing than whole wheat *au naturel*. I move we look for a house and try to get some real food that we can put our teeth into—also something to drink."

"Yes, we must be getting forward," she agreed.

Together they peered out again above the grain. The massed column was still passing, shimmering along the dusty road like a mighty blue-gray serpent.

"Isn't there any end to these fellows?" Stewart asked. "We must have seen about a million."

"Oh, no; this is but a single division—and there are probably a hundred divisions

in the army! There is, no doubt, another division on each one of the roads leading into Belgium. We shall have to keep away from the roads. Let us work our way back through the grain to that strip of woodland. No," she added, as Stewart stooped to pick up the bundle of clothing, "we must leave that. If we should happen to be stopped, it would betray us. What are you doing?"

Without replying, Stewart opened the bundle, thoughtfully selected a strand of the beautiful hair inside it, and placed the lock carefully in a flapped compartment of his pocketbook. Then he retied the bundle and threw over it some of the severed stalks.

"It seems a shame to leave it," he said. "That is a beautiful gown—and the hair! Think of those barbarians opening the bundle and finding that beautiful hair!"

The girl, who had been watching him with brilliant eyes, laughed a little and caught his hand.

"How foolish! Come along! I think I shall let you keep that lock of hair," she added thoughtfully.

Stewart looked at her quickly, and saw that the dimple was visible.

"Thank you," he said. "Of course, I should have asked. Forgive me!"

She gave him a flashing little smile, then, bending low, hurried forward through the grain. Beyond the field lay a stretch of woodland, and presently they heard the sound of running water, and came to a brook flowing gently over a clean, rocky bed.

With a cry of delight the girl fell on her knees beside it, threw off her coat, pushed her sleeves above her elbows, and laved her hands and face in the cool water. Then, bending far over, she drank deep of it.

"How fortunate that my hair is short!" she said, contemplating her reflection. "Otherwise it would be a perfect tangle. I make a very nice boy, don't you think?"

"An adorable boy!" agreed Stewart heartily.

She glanced up at him.

"Thank you! But aren't you going to wash?"

"Not until you have finished. I want to watch you as long as I can. My clothes are even more becoming to you than your own!"

She glanced down over her slender

figure, so fine, so delicately rounded. Then she sprang quickly to her feet, and snatched up the coat.

"I will reconnoiter our position while you make your toilet," she said, and slipped out of sight among the trees.

Ten minutes later Stewart found her seated on a little knoll at the edge of the wood, looking out across the country.

"There is a house over there," she said, nodding to where the corner of a gable showed among the trees. "But it may be dangerous to approach it."

"We can't starve," he pointed out. "And we seem to be lucky. Suppose I go on ahead?"

"No; we will go together," and she sprang to her feet.

The way led over a strip of rocky ground, used, evidently, as a pasture, but there were no cattle grazing on it; then along a narrow lane between low stone walls. Presently they reached the house, which seemed to be the home of a small farmer, for it stood at the back of a yard, with stables and sheds grouped about it.

The gate was open and there was no sign of life within. Stewart started to enter, but suddenly stopped and looked at his companion.

"There is something wrong here," he said, almost in a whisper. "I feel it!"

"So do I," said the girl, and stared about at the deserted space, shivering slightly. Then she looked upward into the clear sky. "It was as if a cloud had come between me and the sun," she added.

"Perhaps it is just that everything seems so deserted," said Stewart, as he stepped through the gate.

"No doubt the people fled when they saw the Germans," she suggested; "or perhaps it was just a rumor that reached them."

Stewart looked around again. It was not only people that were missing from this farmyard, he told himself; there should have been pigs in the sty, chickens scratching in the straw, pigeons on the roof, a cat on the door-step.

"We must have food," he said, and went forward resolutely to the door, which stood ajar.

There was something vaguely sinister in the position of the door, half open and half closed; but after an instant's hesitation he knocked loudly. A minute passed, and another, and there was no response. Nerving

himself as though for a mighty effort, he pushed the door open and looked into the room beyond.

It was evidently the living-room and dining-room combined, and it was in the wildest disorder. Chairs were overturned, a table was lying on its side with one leg broken, dishes lay smashed upon the floor.

Summoning all his resolution, Stewart stepped inside. What frightful thing had happened here? From the chairs and the dishes, it looked as if the family had been surprised at breakfast. But where was the family? Who had surprised them? What had—

And then his heart leaped sickeningly as his eyes fell upon a huddled figure lying in one corner, close against the wall. It was the body of a woman, her clothing disordered, a long, gleaming bread-knife clutched tightly in one hand; and as Stewart bent above her he saw that her head had been beaten in.

CHAPTER X

FORTUNE FROWNS

ONE look at that horribly disfigured face imprinted it indelibly upon Stewart's memory—the blue eyes staring upward, the hair matted with blood, the sprawling body, the gleaming knife caught up in what moment of desperation!

Shaking with horror, he seized his companion's hand and led her away out of the desecrated house, out of the silent yard, out into the narrow lane, where they could breathe freely.

"The Uhlans have passed this way," said the girl, staring up and down the road.

"But," stammered Stewart, wiping his wet forehead, "but I don't understand. Germany is a civilized nation—war is no longer the brutal thing it once was."

"War is always brutal, I fear," said the girl sadly; "and, of course, among a million men there are certain to be some—like that! I am no longer hungry. Let us press on."

Stewart, nodding, followed along beside her, across fields, over little streams, up and down stretches of rocky hillsides, always westward. But he saw nothing; his mind was full of other things.

This was war! A thousand other women would suffer the same fate as the murdered peasant in the farmhouse. Thousands and

thousands more would be thrown, stripped and defenseless, on the world, to live or die as chance might will. A hundred thousand children—perhaps many more than that—would be fatherless; a hundred thousand girls, now ripening into womanhood, would be denied their destiny of marriage and children of their own.

Stewart shook the thought away. The picture his imagination painted was too horrible; it could never come true—not all the emperors on earth could make it come true!

He looked about him at the mellow landscape. Nowhere was there a sign of life. The yellow wheat stood ripe for the harvest. The pastures stretched lush and green—and empty. Here and there above the trees he caught a glimpse of farmhouse chimneys, but no reassuring smoke floated above them. A peaceful land, truly, so Stewart told himself—peaceful as death!

Gradually the country grew rougher and more broken, and ahead of them they could see steep and rocky hillsides, broken by deep valleys and covered by a thick growth of pine.

"We must find a road," said Stewart at last; "we can't climb up and down those hills. And we must find out where we are. There is a certain risk, but we must take it. It is foolish to stumble forward blindly."

"You are right," his companion agreed.

Presently, far below them, at the bottom of a valley, they saw a white road winding; and to this they made their way. Almost at once they came to a house, in whose door stood a buxom, fair-haired woman, with a child clinging to her skirts.

The woman watched them curiously as they approached, and her face seemed to Stewart distinctly friendly.

"Good morning," he said, stopping before the door-step and lifting his hat—an unaccustomed salutation at which the woman stared. "We seem to have lost our way. Can you tell us—"

The woman shook her head.

"My brother and I have lost our way," said his companion, in rapid French. "We have been tramping the hills all morning. How far is it to the nearest village?"

"The nearest village is Battice," answered the woman in the same language. "It is three kilometers from here."

"There is a railway station there?"

"But certainly. How is it you do not know?"

"We come from the other direction."

"From Germany?"

"Yes," answered the girl, after an instant's scrutiny of the woman's face.

"Then you are fugitives? Ah, do not fear to tell me," she added, as the girl hesitated. "I have no love for the Germans."

"Yes," assented the girl, "we are fugitives. We are trying to get to Liège. Have the Germans been this way?"

"No; I have seen nothing of them, but I have heard that a great army has passed along the road through Verviers."

"Where is your man?"

"He has joined the army."

"The German army?"

"Oh, no; the Belgian army. It is doing what it can to hold back the Germans."

The girl's face lighted with enthusiasm.

"Oh, how splendid!" she cried. "How splendid for your brave little country to defy the invader! Bravo, Belgium!"

The woman smiled at her enthusiasm, but shook her head doubtfully.

"I do not know," she said simply. "I do not understand these things. I only know that my man has gone, and that I must harvest our grain and cut our winter wood by myself. But will you not enter and rest yourselves?"

"Thank you. And we are very hungry. We have money to pay for food, if you can let us have some."

"Certainly, certainly!"

The good wife bustled before them into the house.

An hour later, rested, refreshed, with a supply of sandwiches in their pockets, and armed with a rough map drawn from the directions of their hostess, they were ready to set out westward again. She told them that they could probably pass safely through Battice, which was off the main road of the German advance, and that they might find there a vehicle of some sort to take them onward. The trains, she understood, were no longer running.

Finally they thanked her for the twentieth time and bade her good-by. She wished them Godspeed, and stood watching them from the door until they disappeared from view.

They pushed forward vigorously, and presently, huddled in the valley below them, caught sight of the red roofs of the

village. A bell was ringing vigorously, and they could see the people—women and children, for the most part—gathering in toward the church, a small building marked by a gilded cross. Evidently nothing had occurred to disturb the inhabitants of Battice.

Reassured, the two were about to push on down the road, when suddenly, topping the opposite slope, they saw a squadron of horsemen, perhaps fifty strong. They were clad in blue-gray, and each of them bore a long lance upright at his right elbow.

"Uhlans!" cried the girl, and they stopped short, watching with bated breath.

The troop swung down the road toward the village at a sharp trot. Then suddenly it drew rein, and waited in the shadow of some trees until the bell ceased ringing and the last of the congregation entered the church. At the word of command the horsemen touched spur to flank and swept down upon the defenseless town.

A boy saw them first and shouted; then a woman, hurrying toward the church, heard the clatter of hoofs, cast one glance behind her, and ran on, screaming wildly. The screams penetrated the church, and the congregation came pouring out, only to find themselves surrounded by a semicircle of lowered lances.

The lieutenant shouted a command, and three or four of the Uhlans threw themselves from the saddle and disappeared into the church. They were back in a moment, dragging between them a white-haired priest and a rosy-faced old man—the burgomaster, who, even in this situation, managed to retain his dignity. The two were placed before the lieutenant, and a short conference followed, with the townspeople pressing anxiously around.

Suddenly there was an outburst of protest and despair; women were wringing their hands.

"What is it the fellow wants?" asked Stewart.

"Money, perhaps, or supplies. He is evidently demanding more than the village can furnish. But come; we must be getting on."

Stewart would have liked to see the end of the drama, but he followed his companion over the wall at the side of the road, and then around the village along the rough hillside. Suddenly, from the houses below, arose a hideous tumult—shouts, curses, the smashing of glass. In another

moment a flood of people, wailing, screaming, shaking their fists in the air, burst from the town and swept along the road in the direction of Herve.

"They had better have given the supplies," said the girl, looking down at them. "Now they will lose everything—even their houses—see!"

Following the direction of her pointing finger, Stewart saw a black cloud of smoke bulging up from one end of the village.

"But surely," he gasped, "they're not burning it! They wouldn't dare do that!"

"Why not?"

"Isn't looting prohibited by the rules of war?"

"Certainly—looting and the destruction of property of non-combatants."

"Well, then—"

But he stopped, staring helplessly. The cloud of smoke grew in volume, and below it could be seen red tongues of flame.

The fugitives dared not linger. They pushed on, keeping the road, with its rabble of frenzied fugitives, at their right. It was a wild and beautiful country, and under other circumstances Stewart would have gazed in admiring wonder at its rugged cliffs, its deep, precipitous valleys, its thickly wooded hillsides; but now these appeared to him only as so many obstacles between him and safety.

At last the valley opened out, and below them they saw the clustered roofs of another village, which could only be Herve. Around it were broad pastures and fields of yellow grain. Suddenly the girl caught Stewart by the arm.

"Look!" she said, pointing to the field lying nearest them.

A number of old men, women, and children were cutting the grain, tying it into sheaves, and piling the sheaves into stacks, under the supervision of four men. Those four men were clothed in blue-gray and carried rifles in their hands. The invaders were stripping the grain from the fields in order to feed their army!

They worked their way around this village, keeping always in the shelter of the woods along the hillsides. After a weary journey they came out on the other side above the line of the railroad. A sentry, with fixed bayonet, stood guard over a solitary engine; except for him the road seemed quite deserted. The fugitives followed along it for half a mile without seeing any one else.

"We can't keep this up," said Stewart, flinging himself upon the ground. "We shall have to take to the road to make any progress. Do you think we'd better risk it?"

"Let us watch it for a while," the girl suggested.

They sat and watched the road, munching their sandwiches and talking in broken snatches. Ten minutes passed, but no one came in sight.

"It seems safe enough," she said at last, and together they made their way down to it.

"The next village is Fléron," said Stewart, consulting his rough map. "It is about four miles from here, apparently. Liège is about ten miles further. Can we make it to-night?"

"We must!" said the girl fiercely. "Come!"

The road descended steadily along the valley of a pretty river, closed in on either side by densely wooded hills. Here and there, among the trees, they caught glimpses of a white château; below them, along the river, there was an occasional cluster of houses; but they saw few people. The inhabitants of this district either had fled before the enemy, or were keeping carefully indoors, out of his way.

Once the fugitives had an alarm, for a hand-car manned by a squad of German soldiers came spinning past; but fortunately Stewart heard it singing along the rails in time to pull his companion into a clump of underbrush. A little later, along the highway by the river, they saw a patrol of Uhlans riding. Then they came to Fléron, and took to the hills to pass around it.

Here, too, clouds of black smoke hung heavy above certain of the houses, which, for some reason, had been made the marks of German reprisals; and once, above the trees to their right, they saw a column of smoke drifting upward, marking the destruction of a château.

The sun was sinking toward the west by the time they again reached the railroad, and they were both desperately weary; but neither had any thought of rest. The shadows deepened rapidly among the hills, but the darkness was welcome, for it meant added safety.

By the time they reached Bois de Breux night had come in earnest, so they made only a short détour, and were soon back

on the railroad again, with scarcely five miles more to go. For an hour longer they plodded on steadily through the darkness, snatching a few minutes' rest once or twice; too weary to talk or even to look to right or left.

Then, as they turned a bend in the road, they drew back in alarm; for just ahead of them, close beside the track, a bright fire was burning, lighting up the black entrance of a tunnel, before which stood a sentry leaning on his rifle. Five or six other soldiers were lolling about the fire, smoking and talking in low tones.

Stewart looked at them curiously. They were big, good-humored-looking fellows, fathers of families, doubtless, and honest men with kindly hearts. It seemed absurd to suppose that such men as these would loot villages and burn houses and outrage women; it seemed absurd that any one should fear them or hide from them. Stewart, with a feeling that all this threat of war was a chimera, had an impulse to go forward boldly and join them beside the fire. He was sure they would welcome him, make a place for him—

"*Wer da?*" a voice behind him called sharply.

Stewart spun round to find himself facing a leveled rifle, behind which he could see dimly the face of a man wearing a spiked helmet—a patrol, no doubt, who had seen them as they stood carelessly outlined against the fire, and who had crept upon them unheard.

"We are friends," Stewart answered hastily.

The soldier motioned them forward to the fire. The men there had caught up their rifles at the sound of the challenge, and stood peering anxiously out into the darkness; but when the two captives came within the circle of light cast by the fire they stacked their guns and sat down again. Evidently they saw nothing threatening in the appearance of either Stewart or his companion.

Their captor added his gun to the stack, then motioned them to sit down, and sat down opposite them, looking at them closely.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded in German.

"We are trying to get through to Brussels," answered Stewart, in the best German he could muster. "I have not much German. Do you speak English?"

"No. Are you English?" and the blue eyes glinted with an unfriendly light which Stewart was at a loss to understand.

"We are Americans." Stewart saw with relief that the man's face softened perceptibly. On the chance that, if the soldier could not speak English, neither could he read it, he impressively produced his passport. "Here is our safe-conduct from our Secretary of State," he said. "You will see that it is sealed with the seal of the United States. My brother and I were passed at Herbesthal, but could find no conveyance and started to walk. We lost our way, but stumbled upon the railroad some miles back, and decided to follow it until we came to a village. How far away is the nearest village?"

"I do not know," said the man curtly.

He took the passport and stared at it curiously. Then he passed it around the circle, and it finally came back to its owner, who placed it in his pocket.

"You find it correct?" Stewart inquired.

"I know nothing about it. You must wait until our officer arrives."

Stewart felt a sickening sensation at his heart, but he managed to smile.

"He will not be long, I hope," he said.

"We are very tired and hungry."

"He will not be long," answered the other shortly.

The soldier got out his pipe and filled it with tobacco. Stewart glanced at his companion. She was sitting hunched up, her arms about her knees, staring thoughtfully at the fire.

"This man says we must wait here until their officer arrives," he explained in English. "My brother does not understand German," he added to the men.

"How stupid!" said the girl. "I am so tired and stiff!"

"It is no use to argue with them, I suppose?"

"No. They will refuse to decide anything for themselves. They rely wholly upon their officers."

She rose wearily, stretched herself, stamped her foot as if it were asleep, and then sat down again and closed her eyes. She looked very young and fragile, and was shivering from head to foot.

"My brother is not strong," said Stewart to the attentive group. "I fear all this hardship and exposure will be more than he can bear."

One of the men, with a gesture of sym-

pathy, rose, unrolled his blanket, and spread it on the bank behind the fire.

"Let the young man lie down there," he said.

"Oh, thank you!" cried Stewart. "Come, Tommy," he added, touching the girl on the arm. "Lie down till the officer comes."

She opened her eyes, saw the blanket, nodded sleepily, and, still shivering, followed Stewart to it. Lying down, she permitted him to roll her in it, and apparently dropped off to sleep on the instant.

Stewart returned to the circle about the fire, nodding his satisfaction. They all smiled, as men do who have done a kind deed.

But Stewart, though doing his best to keep a placid countenance, was far from easy in his mind. One thing was certain—they must escape before the officer arrived. He, no doubt, would be able both to read and speak English, and the passport would betray them at once. Without question, a warning had been flashed from headquarters to every patrol to arrest the holder of that passport, and to send him and his companion, under close guard, back to Herbesthal. But how to escape?

Stewart glanced carefully about him, cursing the carelessness that had brought them into this trap, the imbecility which had held them staring at the German outpost, instead of taking instantly to the woods, as they should have done. They deserved to be captured!

The sentry was pacing slowly back and forth at the tunnel entrance, fifteen yards away; the other men were lolling about the fire half asleep. It would be possible, doubtless, to bolt into the darkness before they could grab their rifles; so there was only the sentry to fear, and the danger from him would not be very great. But it would be necessary to keep to the track for some distance, because, where it dropped into the tunnel, its sides were precipices impossible to scale in the darkness.

The danger, then, lay in the fact that the men might have time to snatch up their rifles and fire down the track before the fugitives would be able to leave it. But it was a danger which must be faced—there was no other way. Once in the woods they would be safe.

Stewart, musing over the situation with

eyes half closed, recalled dim memories of daring escapes from Indians and outlaws, described in detail in the blood-and-thunder reading of his youth. There was one ruse which never failed. Just as the pursuers were about to fire the fugitive would fling himself flat on his face, and the bullets would fly harmlessly over him; then he would spring to his feet and go safely on his way.

Stewart smiled to remember how religiously he had believed in that stratagem, and how he had determined to practise it if ever need arose. He had never contemplated the possibility of having to flee from a squad of men armed with magazine rifles, who could fire not one volley, but five!

Then he shook these thoughts away; there was no time to be lost. He must warn his companion, for they must make the dash at the same instant.

He glanced toward where she lay in the shadow of the cliff, and saw that she was turning restlessly from side to side, as if fevered. With real anxiety Stewart hastened to her, knelt beside her, and placed his hand gently on her forehead. At the touch she opened her eyes and stared up at him.

"Ask for some water," she said weakly; and then, in the same tone: "We must make a dash for it at the moment, they salute their officer."

Stewart turned to the soldiers, who were listening with inquiring faces.

"My brother is feverish," he explained. "He asks for a drink of water."

One of the men was instantly on his feet, unscrewing his canteen and holding it to the sick boy's lips while Stewart supported his comrade's head. She drank eagerly, dropped back with a sigh of satisfaction, and closed her eyes.

"He will go to sleep now," said Stewart. "Thank you!"

He himself took a drink from the flask. He was surprised to find how cool and fresh the water tasted. When he looked at the flask more closely he saw that it was made like a Thermos bottle, with outer and inner shells. He handed it back to its owner with a nod of admiration.

"That is very clever," he said. "Everything seems to have been thought of."

"Yes, everything," agreed the other. "No army is equipped like ours. I am told that the French are in rags."

"I don't know," said Stewart cautiously. "I have never seen them."

"And their army is not organized; we shall be in Paris before they can mobilize enough men to stop us. It will be 1870 over again. The war will be ended in two or three months."

"I certainly hope so," Stewart agreed. There was a moment's silence. "How much longer shall we have to wait?" he asked at last.

"Our officer should be here at any moment."

"It is absolutely necessary that we wait for him?"

"Yes, absolutely."

"We are very hungry," Stewart explained.

The soldier pondered for a moment, and then rose to his feet.

"I think I can give you food," he said. "It is permitted to give food, is it not?" he asked his comrades.

When they nodded he opened his knapsack and took out a package of hard, square biscuits and a thick roll of sausage. While Stewart watched with watering mouth he cut the sausage into generous slices, placed a slice on each of the biscuits, and passed them over.

"Splendid!" cried Stewart. "I don't know how to thank you; but at least I can pay you."

He dived into his pocket and produced a ten-mark piece—his last. The soldier shook his head.

"It is for the whole squad," added Stewart persuasively. "You will be needing tobacco some day, and this will come in handy."

The soldier smiled, took the little coin, and placed it carefully in his pocket.

"You are right about the tobacco," he said. "I thank you."

He sat down again before the fire, while Stewart hastened to his companion and dropped beside her.

"See what I've got," he said. "Food!"

She opened her eyes, struggled to a sitting posture, and held out an eager hand. A moment later they were both munching the sausage and biscuits as if they had never tasted anything so delicious—as, indeed, they never had.

"Oh, how good that was!" she said when the last crumb was swallowed. She waved her thanks to the watching group about the fire. "Remember," she added

in a lower tone, as she sank back upon her elbow, "the instant—"

She stopped, staring toward the tunnel, one hand grasping the blanket.

Stewart, following her look, saw the sentry stiffen, turn on his heel, and hold his rifle rigidly in front of him as a tall figure, clad in a long gray coat and carrying an electric torch, stepped out of the darkness of the tunnel. At the same instant the men about the fire sprang to their feet.

"Now!" said the girl, and threw back the blanket.

In an instant, hand in hand, they had glided into the darkness.

CHAPTER XI

THE NIGHT ATTACK

A SAVAGE voice behind them shouted "Halt!" A bullet sang past, and a rifle exploded with a noise like a cannon—or so it seemed to Stewart; then another and another. It was the sentry, of course, pumping bullets after them. Stewart's flesh crept at the thought that any instant now might bring a volley, which would sweep the track with a storm of lead. If he could only look back, if he only knew—

Suddenly the girl pulled him to the right, and he saw that there was a cleft in the steep bank. Even as they sprang into it the volley came, then a second and a third, and then the sound of shouting voices and running feet.

Savagely the fugitives fought their way upward, over rocks, through briars—scratched, torn, bleeding, panting for breath. Even in the daytime it would have been a desperate scramble; now it soon became a sort of horrid nightmare, which might end at any instant at the bottom of a cliff. More than once Stewart told himself that he could not go on, that his heart would burst if he took another step—and yet he *did* go on, up and up, close behind his comrade, who seemed borne on superhuman wings.

At last she stopped and pressed close against him. He could feel how her heart was thumping.

"Wait!" she panted. "Listen!"

Not a sound broke the stillness of the wood.

"I think we are safe," she said. "Let us rest a while."

They sat down side by side on a great rock. Gradually their gasping breath slackened, and the pounding of their hearts grew quieter.

"I must have dropped my cap in that scramble," she said at last.

Stewart put his hand to his head and found that his hat was also missing.

"I feel as if I had been flayed alive," he said. "Those briars were pretty bad. It was lucky we didn't break a leg—or stop a bullet," he added.

"We must not run such risks again," his companion said. "We had better keep clear of roads—the Germans seem to be everywhere. Let us keep on until we reach the crest of this hill, and then we can rest till daylight."

"All right," agreed Stewart. "Whither thou goest, I will go!"

The ground grew less rough as they proceeded, and at last they came to the end of the wood. Overhead a full moon was sinking toward the west—a moon which lighted the rolling meadow before them, and which seemed, after the darkness of the woods and valleys, as brilliant as the sun.

"We must be nearly at the top," said the girl. "These hills almost all have meadows on their summits, where the peasants pasture their flocks."

And so it proved, for beyond the meadow there was another narrow strip of woodland; and as they came to its farther edge the fugitives stopped with a gasp of astonishment.

Below them stretched a broad valley; and as far as the eye could reach it was dotted with flaring fires.

"The German army!" said the girl.

The two stood staring. Evidently a countless host lay camped below them, but no sound reached them, save the occasional rumble of a train along some distant track. The Kaiser's legions were sleeping until the dawn should give the signal for the advance—an advance which would be as the sweep of an avalanche, hideous, irresistible, remorseless, crushing everything in its path.

"Oh, look, look!" cried the girl, and caught him by the arm.

To the west, not far away, a flash of flame gleamed against the sky, then another and another and another. In a moment there drifted to their ears a savage rumble as of distant thunder.

"What is it?" asked Stewart, staring at the ever-increasing bursts of flame. "Not a battle, surely!"

"It is the forts at Liège!" cried the girl hoarsely. "The Germans are attacking them, and they resist. Oh, brave little Belgium!"

The firing grew more furious. A dozen search-lights began to play over the hillside before the nearest fort, and they could dimly see its outline on the hilltop—strangely like a dreadnought, with its wireless mast and its armored turrets vomiting flame. Above it, from time to time, a shell from the German batteries burst like a greenish-white rocket; but it was evident that the assailants had not yet got their guns up in any number.

Then, suddenly, below the thunder of the cannon, there surged a vicious undercurrent of sound which Stewart knew must be the reports of machine guns, or perhaps of rifles; and all along the slope below the fort innumerable little flashes stabbed upward toward the summit. Surely infantry would never attack such a position, Stewart told himself; and then he held his breath, for, full in the glare of the search-lights, he could see what seemed to be a tidal wave sweeping up the hill.

A very fury of firing came from the Belgian guns, yet still the wave swept on. As it neared the fort, what seemed to be another wave swept down to meet it. The firing slackened, almost stopped, and Stewart, his blood pounding in his temples, knew that the struggle was hand to hand, breast to breast. It lasted but a minute; then the attacking tide flowed back down the hill, and again the machine guns of the fort took up that deadly chorus.

"They have been driven back!" gasped the girl. "The Germans have been driven back!"

How many, Stewart wondered, were lying out there dead on the hillside? How many homes had been rendered fatherless in those few desperate moments? And this was but the first of a thousand such charges—the first of a thousand such moments!

There, before his eyes, men had killed one another—for what? There was no doubt that the men in the forts were defending their fatherland from invasion—they were fighting for liberty and independence. That was understandable—it was even admirable.

But those others—the men in the spiked helmets—what were they fighting for? To destroy liberty? To wrest independence from a proud little people?

Again the big guns in the armored turrets were bellowing forth their wrath; and then the search-lights stabbed suddenly up into the sky, sweeping this way and that.

"They fear an air-ship attack," breathed the girl, and she and Stewart stood staring out into the night.

Shells from the German guns began again to burst about the fort, but its own guns were silent, and it lay there crouching as if in terror. Only its search-lights swept back and forth.

Suddenly a gun spoke—they could see the flash of its discharge, seemingly straight up into the air; then a second and a third; and then the search-lights caught the great bulk of a Zeppelin and held it clearly outlined as it swept across the sky. There was a furious burst of firing, but the ship sped on unharmed, passed beyond the range of the search-lights, blotted out the setting moon for an instant, and was gone.

"It did not dare pass over the fort," said the girl. "It was flying too low. Perhaps it will come back at a greater altitude. I have seen them at the maneuvers in Alsace—frightful things, moving like the wind."

This way and that the search-lights swept in great arcs across the heavens, in frenzied search for this monster of the air; but it did not return. Perhaps it had been damaged by the gun-fire—or perhaps, Stewart told himself with a shiver, it was speeding onward toward Paris, to rain terror from the August sky.

Gradually the firing ceased; but the more distant forts were using their search-lights, too. Seeing them all aroused and vigilant, the Germans did not attack again. Their surprise had failed; now they must wait for their heavy guns.

"Well," asked Stewart at last, "what now?"

"I think it would be well to stay here till morning; then we can see how the army is placed and how best to get past it. Evidently we can't go on to-night."

"I'm deadly tired," said Stewart, looking about him into the darkness, "but I should like a softer bed than the bare ground."

"Let us go to the edge of this meadow,"

the girl suggested. "Perhaps we shall find another field of grain."

But luck was against them. Beyond the meadow the woods began again.

"The meadow is better than the woods," said Stewart. "At least it has some grass on it—the woods have nothing but rocks!"

"Let us stay in the shelter of the hedge. Then, if a patrol stumbles into the field before we are awake, it will not see us. Perhaps they will attempt a pursuit in the morning. They will guess that we headed for the west."

"I don't think there's much danger. It would be like hunting for a needle in a haystack—in a dozen haystacks! But won't you be cold?"

"Oh, no," she protested quickly; "the night is quite warm. Good night, my friend."

"Good night," Stewart answered.

He withdrew a few steps, and made himself as comfortable as he could. There were irritating bumps in the ground, which seemed to come exactly in the wrong place; but he finally adjusted himself, and lay and looked up at the stars, and wondered what the morrow would bring forth.

He was growing a little weary of the whole adventure. He was growing weary of the restraint which the situation imposed upon him. He was aching to take this girl in his arms, and hold her close, and whisper a certain secret into her rosy ear; but to do that now, to do it until they were in safety, until she had no further need of him, would be a cowardly thing—a cowardly thing—a cowardly—

He was awakened by a touch on the arm. He opened his eyes, to find the sun shining high in the heavens and his comrade looking down at him with face almost equally radiant.

"I hated to wake you," she said, "but it is getting late."

Stewart sat up, rubbed his eyes, and looked at her again. Her hair was neatly combed, her face was fresh and shining, her hands showed some ugly scratches, but were scrupulously clean. Even her clothing, though torn here and there, had evidently been carefully brushed.

"What astounds me," said Stewart deliberately, "is how you do it. You spend the first half of the night scrambling over rocks and through briars, and the second half sleeping on the ground, and you emerge in the morning as fresh and radi-

ant as if you had just stepped from your boudoir. I wish I knew the secret!"

"Come and I will show you," she said, laughing gaily.

She led him away into the wood. Presently he heard the sound of falling water, and his guide brought him triumphantly to a brook gurgling over mossy rocks, at whose foot was a shallow basin.

"There is my boudoir," she said. "The secret of beauty is in the bath. I will reconnoiter the neighborhood while you try it for yourself."

Stewart flung off his clothes, splashed joyously into the cold, clear water, and had perhaps the most delicious bath of his life. There was no soap, to be sure, but much may be done by persistent rubbing; and there were no towels, but the warm wind of the morning made them almost unnecessary. He got back into his clothes again with a sense of astonishing well-being—except for a most persistent gnawing at his stomach.

"I wonder where we shall breakfast to-day," he mused, as he laced his shoes. "Nowhere, most probably. Oh, well, if that dear girl can stand it, I oughtn't to complain!"

And he fell to thinking of her, of her grace, of the curve of her red lips—

"Confound it!" he said. "I can't stand it much longer. Friendship is all very well, and the big brother act may do for a while, but I can't keep it up forever, and what's more, I won't!"

And then he heard her calling, in the clear, high voice he had grown to love.

"All right!" he shouted. "Come along!"

Presently she appeared between the trees, and he watched her with beating heart—so straight, so supple, so perfect in every line!

"Did the magic work?" she inquired gaily.

"Partly; but it takes more than water to remove a two days' growth of beard." Stewart ran a rueful finger over his stubbly chin. "But can it be only two days since you burst into my room at the Kölner Hof and threw your arms around my neck and kissed me?"

"Please don't speak of it," she pleaded with crimson cheeks. "It was not an easy thing for a girl to do; but that spy was watching, so I nerved myself, and—"

"You did it very well indeed," he said

reminiscently. "And to think that not once since then—"

"Once was quite enough."

"Oh, I don't blame you; I know I'm not an attractive object. People will be taking us for beauty and the beast."

"Neither the one nor the other!" she corrected.

"Well, I take back the beast, but not the beauty!"

"There were to be no compliments until we were out of Germany," she protested lightly.

"We are out of Germany," he said, and got slowly to his feet, his eyes on fire.

"No, no!" she protested, backing hastily away from him. "This is German ground—let me show you!" She ran before him out into the meadow. "Look down yonder!"

Looking down, Stewart saw the mighty army which had been mustered to crush France.

As far as the eye could reach, and from side to side of the broad valley, it stretched—masses of men and horses and wagons and artillery—masses and masses—thousands upon thousands—mile upon mile. A broad highway ran along either side of the river, and along each road a compact host moved steadily westward toward Liège.

Suddenly, from the west, there came the thunder of heavy guns, and Stewart knew that the attack had commenced again. Again men were being driven forward to death, as they would be driven day after day, until the end, whatever that might be. And whatever it was, not a single dead man could be brought to life again; not a single maimed man made whole; not a single dollar of the treasure which was being poured out like a flood could be recovered. It was all lost, wasted, worse than wasted, since it was being used to destroy, not to create.

Incredible—impossible—it could not be! Even with that mighty army beneath his eyes, Stewart told himself for the hundredth time that it could not be!

The voice of his comrade broke in upon his thoughts.

"We must work our way westward along the hills until we come to the Meuse," she said. "This is the valley of the Vesdre, which flows into the Meuse, so we have only to follow it."

"Can't you prevail upon your fairy godmother to provide breakfast first?"

asked Stewart. "I'm sure you have only to suggest it, and the table would appear laden with an iced melon, bacon and eggs, crisp rolls, yellow butter, and a pot of coffee—I think I can smell the coffee!" He closed his eyes and sniffed. "How perfect it would be to sit here and eat that breakfast and watch the Germans! Oh, well," he added, as she turned away, "if not here, then somewhere else. Wait! Isn't that a house over yonder?"

It was indeed a tiny house whose gable just showed above the trees, and they made their way cautiously toward it. It stood at the side of a small garden, with two or three outbuildings about it, and it was shielded on one side by an orchard. No smoke rose from the chimney, nor was there any sign of life.

Stewart, who had been crouching behind the hedge beside his companion, looking at all this, rose suddenly to his feet and started forward.

"Come on," he cried; "the Germans haven't been this way—there's a chicken."

He pointed to where a plump hen was scratching industriously under the hedge.

"There is another sign," said the girl, as they crossed the garden and pointed to the ground. "The potatoes and turnips have not been dug."

"It must be here we're going to have that breakfast," cried Stewart.

He knocked triumphantly at the door. There was no response, and he knocked again. Then he tried the door, but it was locked.

There was another door at the rear of the house, but it also was locked. There were also three windows, but they were all tightly closed with wooden shutters.

"We've got to have something to eat, that's certain," said Stewart doggedly. "We shall have to break in," and he looked about for a weapon with which to attack the door.

"No, no," protested the girl quickly. "That would be too like the Uhlans. Let us see if there is not some other way!"

"What other way can there be?"

"Perhaps there is none," she answered. "If there is not, we will go on our way, and leave the house undamaged. You, too, seem to have been poisoned by this virus of war!"

"I only know I'm hungry," said Stewart. "If I've been poisoned by anything, it's by the virus of appetite!"

"If you were in your own country, and found yourself hungry, would you break into the first house you came to in order to get food?" she asked. "Certainly not—you would do without food before you would do that. Is it not so?"

"Yes," said Stewart in a low tone. "That is so. You were right."

He stared out into the road and reflected how easy—how inevitable, almost—it was to become a robber among thieves, a murderer among cutthroats. He understood how it happens that in war even the kindest man may become bloodthirsty, even the most honest a looter of defenseless homes.

"See what I have found!" cried a voice.

He turned to see the girl running toward him with hands outstretched. In each hand she held three eggs.

"Very well for a beginning," he commented. "Now for the melon, the bacon, the rolls, the butter, and the coffee!"

"I fear that those must wait," she said. "Here is your breakfast."

She handed him three of the eggs. Stewart looked at them rather blankly.

"Thanks!" he said. "But I don't quite see—"

"Then watch."

Sitting down on the door-step, she cracked one of her eggs gently, picked away the loosened bit of shell at its end, and put the egg to her lips.

"Oh!" he said. "So *that's* it!"

Sitting down beside her, he followed her example. He had heard of sucking eggs, but he had never before tried it, and he found it rather difficult and not particularly pleasant. But the first egg undoubtedly did assuage the pangs of hunger; the second assuaged them still more, and the third quite extinguished them. In fact, he felt a little surfeited.

"And now," she said, "for the dessert."

"Dessert!" protested Stewart. "Is there dessert? Why didn't you tell me? I never heard of dessert for breakfast, and I'm afraid I haven't room for it."

"It will keep," she assured him.

Leading him around the larger of the outbuildings, she showed him a tree hanging thick with ruddy apples.

"There are our supplies for the campaign," she announced.

"My compliments!" he said. "You would make a great general."

They ate one or two apples and then

filled their pockets. From one of hers the girl drew a pipe and pouch of tobacco.

"Wouldn't you like to smoke?" she asked. "I've heard that a pipe is a great comfort in times of stress."

Calling down blessings upon her head, Stewart filled up. Never had tobacco tasted so good, never had that old pipe seemed so sweet as when he blew out the first puff upon the morning air.

"*Salvation Yeo* was right," he said. "As a hungry man's food, a sad man's cordial, a chilly man's fire, there's nothing like it under the canopy of heaven! I only wish you could enjoy it, too!"

"I can enjoy your enjoyment!" she laughed.

They set happily off together. At the corner of the wood Stewart turned for a last look at the house.

"How glad I am I didn't break in!" he said.

CHAPTER XII

AN ARMY IN ACTION

As they advanced, the sound of cannonading grew fiercer and fiercer, and the undertone of rifle fire more perceptible. It was evident that the Germans were rapidly getting more and more guns into action, and that the infantry attack was also being hotly pressed.

Below them, in the valley, they caught glimpses from time to time, as the trees opened out a little, of the gray-clad host marching steadily forward, as if to overwhelm the forts by mere weight of numbers. As they came out above a rocky bluff they saw a new sight—an earnest that the Belgians were fighting to some purpose.

In a level field beside the road a long tent had been pitched, and above it floated the flag of the Red Cross. Toward it, along the road, came slowly a seemingly unending line of motor-ambulances. Each of these in turn stopped opposite the tent, and white-clad assistants lifted out the stretchers, each with its huddled occupant, and carried them quickly, yet very carefully, inside the tent.

In a moment the bearers were back again, pushed the empty stretchers into place, and the ambulance turned and sped swiftly toward the battle-field. Here, too, it was evident that there was admirable

and smooth-working system—a system which alleviated, so far as it was possible to do so, the horror and the suffering of battle.

Stewart could close his eyes and see what was going on inside that tent. He could see the stripping away of the clothing, the hasty examination, the sterilization of the wound, and then, if an operation was necessary, the quick preparation, the application of the ether-cone, and the swift, unerring flash of the surgeon's knife doing its work with skill.

"That's where I should be," he said half to himself. "I might be of some use there!" He turned his eyes along the road. "Great Heavens, look at that gun!"

Along the road below them came a mighty cannon, drawn by a monster tractor. Stewart had never seen such a gun—had never imagined that such a gun existed. Its tremendous wheels were encircled with heavy blocks—the so-called caterpillar tires—to keep them from sinking into the road; its long trail seemed mighty enough to withstand the shock of an earthquake; and the gun itself, pointing steeply upward, was of a girth so huge, of a weight so tremendous, that it seemed impossible it could be handled at all. And yet it could be handled easily and accurately, as was soon to be shown; for this was the Krupp contribution to the war—the largest siege-gun ever made, hurling a missile so powerful that neither steel nor stone nor armored concrete could stand against it.

In silence the two fugitives watched this mighty engine of destruction pass along the road to its appointed task. And as it passed, the troops, opening to right and left, cheered it wildly, for it meant that they would perhaps be spared the desperate charge which meant almost certain death.

Scarcely had the first siege-gun gone by, when a second appeared and then a third, each apparently more formidable than the others. Behind them came a long train of ammunition-carts.

"These Germans are a wonderful people," said Stewart, following the three monsters with his eyes. "We must give them credit for that. They seem prepared for everything."

"Yes," agreed his companion; "for everything except one thing."

"And that?"

"The spirit of a people who love liberty. They thought Belgium would stand aside in fear."

"But surely you don't expect Belgium to win?"

"Oh, no! But every day she holds the German army here is a battle won for France. Oh, France will honor Belgium now! See, the army has been stopped. It is no longer advancing!"

What was happening to the westward they could not see, or even guess, but it was true that the helmeted host had ceased its march, had broken ranks, and was stacking arms and throwing off its accouterments in the fields along the road. The halt was to be for some time, it seemed, for everywhere camp-kitchens were being hauled into place.

"Come on! Come on!" urged the girl. "We must reach the Meuse before this tide rolls across it."

They pressed forward again along the wooded hillside. Twice they had to cross deep valleys that ran back into the mountain, and once they had a narrow escape from a cavalry patrol which came cantering past so close upon their heels that they had barely time to throw themselves into the underbrush.

They could see, too, that even in the hills caution was necessary, for raiding parties had evidently struck up into them, as was proved by an occasional column of smoke rising from a burning house. Once they came upon an old peasant with a face wrinkled like a withered apple, sitting and staring down at the German host, so preoccupied that he did not even raise his eyes as they passed. And at last they came out above the broad plain where the Vesdre flows into the Meuse.

Liège, with its towers and terraced streets, was concealed from them by a bend in the river and by a bold bluff which thrust out toward it from the east. The bluff was crowned by a turreted fortress—perhaps the same one that they had seen the night before—which was vomiting flame and iron down into the valley. The trees and bushes that clothed the slopes concealed the infantry which was doubtless lying there, but in the valley just below them they could see a battery of heavy guns thundering against the Belgian fort. So rapidly were the guns served that the roar of their discharge was almost continuous, while high above it rose the scream

of the shells as they hurtled toward their mark.

There was something fascinating in the precise, calculated movement of the gunners—one crouching on the trail of the cannon, two seated on either side of the breech, six others bringing up the shells from the caisson in the rear. An officer was watching the effect of the fire through a pair of powerful glasses, and speaking a word of direction now and then.

Their fire was evidently taking effect, for it was this battery that the gunners in the fort were trying to silence—trying blindly, for the German guns were masked by a high hedge and a strip of orchard, and only a tenuous, quickly vanishing wisp of white smoke marked the discharge of the projectiles. So the Belgian gunners dropped their shells hither and yon, hoping that chance might send one of them into the battery.

They did not find the battery, but they found other marks—a beautiful white villa, on the first slope of the hillside, was torn asunder like a house of cards and a moment later was in flames. A squad of cavalry, riding gaily back from a reconnaissance down the river, was scattered. A peasant family, father and mother and three children, hastening along the road to a place of safety, was instantly blotted out.

It was evident now that the Meuse was the barrier which had stopped the army. Far up toward Liège were the ruins of a bridge, and no doubt all the others had been blown up by the Belgians.

Down by the river-bank a large force of engineers was working like mad to throw a pontoon across the swift current. The material had already been brought up—heavy, flat-bottomed boats, carried on wagons drawn by motor-tractors, great beams and planks, boxes of bolts—everything, in a word, needed to build this bridge just here at a point which had no doubt been selected long in advance. The bridge shot out into the river with a speed which seemed to Stewart almost miraculous. Boat after boat was towed into place and anchored firmly; great beams were bolted into position, each of them fitting exactly, and then the heavy planks were laid with the precision and rapidity of a machine.

Indeed, Stewart told himself, it was really a machine that he was watching—

a machine of flesh and blood, wonderfully trained for just such feats as this.

"Look! Look!" cried the girl.

Following her pointing finger, Stewart saw an aeroplane sweeping toward them from the direction of the city. Evidently the defenders of the fort, weary of firing blindly at a battery they could not see, were sending a scout to uncover it.

The aeroplane flew very high at first—so high that the two men in it appeared the merest specks, but almost at once two high-angle guns were firing away at it, though the shells fell far short. Gradually it circled lower and lower, as if unconscious of the marksmen in the valley. As it swept past the hill Stewart glimpsed the men quite plainly—one with his hands upon the levers, the other, with a pair of glasses to his eyes, eagerly scanning the ground beneath.

Happening to glance toward the horizon, Stewart was held enthralled by a new spectacle. High over the hills to the east flew a mammoth shape, straight toward the fort. Its defenders saw their danger almost at once, and, hastily elevating some of their guns, greeted the Zeppelin with a salvo. But it came straight on with incredible speed, and as it passed above the fort a terrific explosion shook the mountain to its base.

Staring with bated breath, Stewart told himself that that was the end, that not one stone of that great fortress remained upon another; but almost instantly another volley sent after the fleeing air-ship told that the fort still stood—that the bomb had missed its mark.

The aeroplane scouts, their vision shadowed by the broad wings of their machine, had not seen the Zeppelin until the explosion brought them sharp round toward it. Then, with a sudden upward swoop, they leaped forward in pursuit. But they were too late to overtake the monster; it was already far away, and in a moment disappeared over the hills to the west. So, after a moment's breathless flight, the biplane turned, circled slowly above the fort, and dropped down toward the town behind it.

Three minutes later a shell burst squarely in the midst of the German battery, killing many men and disabling two of the guns. At once the horses were brought up and the remaining guns whirled away to a new emplacement, while a passing motor-

ambulance was stopped to pick up the wounded.

Stewart, who had been watching all this with something of the feelings of a spectator at some tremendous panorama, was suddenly conscious of a mighty stream of men approaching the river from the head of the valley. A regiment of cavalry rode in front, their long lances giving them an appearance indiscribably picturesque; behind them came column after column of infantry, moving like clockwork, their blue-gray uniforms blending so perfectly with the landscape that it was difficult to tell where the columns began or where they ended. Their passage reminded Stewart of the quiver of heat above a sultry landscape—a vibration of the air scarcely perceptible.

All the columns were converging on the river. Looking toward it, Stewart saw that the bridge was almost done. As the last planks were laid a squadron of Uhlans, which had been held in readiness, dashed across, and, deploying in the shape of a fan, advanced to reconnoiter the country on the other side.

"This looks like invasion in earnest!" said Stewart.

The girl nodded without replying, her eyes on the advancing columns. The cavalry was the first to reach the bridge, and filed rapidly across to reinforce their comrades; then the infantry pressed forward in solid column. Stewart could see how the boats settled in the water under the weight.

High above all other sounds came the hideous shriek of a great shell, which flew over the bridge and exploded in the water a hundred yards beyond it. A minute later there came another shriek, and this time the shell fell slightly short. But the third shell—the third shell!

Surely, Stewart told himself, the bridge will be cleared; that close-packed column will not be exposed to a risk so awful. But it pressed on, without a pause, without a break. What must be the soldiers' thoughts as they waited for the third shell!

Again that high, hideous, blood-curdling shriek split through the air, and the next instant a shell exploded squarely in the middle of the bridge. Stewart had a moment's vision of a tangle of shattered bodies, then he saw that the bridge was gone and the river filled with drowning men, weighed down by their heavy ac-

couterments. He could hear their shrill cries of terror as they struggled in the current; then the cries ceased, and the river swept most of them away. Only a very few managed to reach the bank.

Stewart hid his face in his trembling hands. It was too hideous! It could not be! He could not bear it—the world would not bear it, if it knew!

A sharp cry from his companion told him that the awful drama was not yet played to an end. She was pointing beyond the river, where the cavalry and the small body of infantry which had got across seemed thrown into sudden confusion. Horses reared and fell, men dropped from their saddles. The infantry threw themselves forward upon their faces; and to Stewart's ears there came the sharp rattle of musketry.

"The Belgians are attacking them!" cried the girl. "They are driving them back!"

That cavalry, so superbly trained, that infantry, so expertly officered, were not to be driven back without a struggle. The Uhlans formed into line and swept forward, with lances couched, over the ridge beyond the river and out of sight, in a furious charge. But the Belgians must have stood firm, for at the end of a few moments the troopers straggled back again, sadly diminished in numbers, and rode rapidly away down the river, leaving the infantry to its fate.

Meanwhile, on the German bank of the river, a battery of quick-firers had already been wheeled into position, and was singing its deadly tune to hold the Belgians back. Already the men of that little company had found a sort of refuge behind a line of hummocks. Already some heavier guns were being hurried into position to defend a new bridge, which the engineers began to build farther down the stream, where it would be better masked from the fort's attack.

Evidently the Belgians did not intend to enter into that zone of fire, and the fight settled down to a dogged, long-distance one.

"We cannot get across here," said the girl at last. "We shall have to work our way down-stream until we are past the Germans. If we can join the Belgians we are safe."

But to get past the Germans proved a far greater task than they had anticipated.

There seemed to be no end to the gray-clad legions. Brigade after brigade packed the stretch of level ground along the river, while the road was crowded with an astounding tangle of transport-wagons, cook-wagons, armored motors, artillery, tractors, ambulances, and automobiles of every sort, evidently seized by the army in its advance.

Looking at them, Stewart could not but wonder how on earth they had ever been assembled there, and, still more, how they were ever going to be got away again. Also, he thought how easily might they be cut to pieces by a battery posted on that ridge across the river.

Looking across, he saw that the army chiefs had foreseen that danger and guarded against it, for a strong body of cavalry had been thrown across the river to screen the advance, while along the bank, behind hasty but well-built entrenchments, long lines of artillery had been massed to repel any attack from that direction.

But no attack came. The little Belgian army evidently had its hands full elsewhere, and was very busy indeed, as the roar of firing both up and down the river testified. As the fugitives walked on along the hillside they saw that one avenue of advance would soon be open, for a large force of engineers, heavily guarded by cavalry and quick-firers, was repairing a bridge whose central span had been blown up by the Belgians as they retreated.

The bridge had connected two little villages, that on the east bank of the river dominated by a beautiful white château placed at the edge of a cliff. Of the villages nothing remained but smoking heaps of ruins, and a flag above the château showed that it had been converted into a staff headquarters.

Where was the owner of the château? Stewart wondered, looking up at it. Where were the women who had sat upon its terrace? Where were all the people who had lived in those two villages? Wandering somewhere to the westward, homeless and destitute, every one of them—haggard women and hungry children and tottering old men, whose quiet world had turned suddenly to chaos.

"Well," said Stewart at last, "it looks as if we shall have to wait until these fellows clear out. We can't get across the

river as long as there is a line like that before it."

"Perhaps, when they begin to advance, they will leave a break in the line somewhere," his companion suggested. "Or perhaps we can slip across in the darkness. Let us wait and see."

So they sat down behind the screen of a clump of bushes and munched their apples while they watched the scene below. Stewart even ventured to light his pipe again.

A flotilla of boats of all shapes and sizes, commandeered, no doubt, all up and down the river, plied busily back and forth, augmenting the troops on the other side as rapidly as possible; and again Stewart marveled at the absolute order and system preserved in this operation, which might so easily have become confused. There was no crowding, no overloading, no hurrying, but everywhere a calm and efficient celerity.

A certain number of men entered each of the boats—leading their horses by the bridle, if they were cavalry—and the boats pushed off. Reluctant horses were touched with a whip, but most of them stepped down into the water quietly and without hesitation, showing that they had been drilled no less than their masters, and swam strongly along beside the boat. On the other shore the disembarkation was conducted in the same unhurried fashion, and the boat swung back into the stream again for another load.

But a great army cannot be conveyed across a river in small boats, and it was not until mid-afternoon, when the repairs on the bridge were finished, that the real forward movement began. From that moment it swept forward like a flood—first the remainder of the cavalry, then long batteries of quick-firers, then regiment after regiment of infantry, each regiment accompanied by its transport. Looking down at the tangle of wagons and guns and motors, Stewart saw that it was not really a tangle, but an ordered arrangement, which unrolled itself smoothly and without friction.

The advance was slow, but it was unceasing, and by nightfall at least fifteen thousand men had crossed the river. Still the host encamped along it seemed as great as ever. As one detachment crossed another came up from somewhere in the rear to take its place.

Stewart's brain reeled as he gazed down at them and tried to estimate their number; and this was only one small corner of the Kaiser's army. For leagues and leagues to north and south it was pressing forward; no doubt along the whole frontier similar hosts were massed for the invasion. It was gigantic, incredible—that word was in his thoughts more frequently than any other. He could not believe his own eyes; his brain refused to credit the evidence of his senses. Something was wrong somewhere; surely it was a weird illusion, a hideous nightmare!

And each unit of this great array, each company, each squad, seemed to live its own life and to be sufficient unto itself. Stewart could see the company cooks preparing the evening meal; the heavy, wheeled camp-stoves were fired up, great kettles of soup were set bubbling, long loaves of dark bread were cut into thick slices; and finally, at a bugle-call, the men fell into line, white-enameled cups in hand, and received their rations.

It seemed to Stewart that he could smell the appetizing odor of that thick soup—an odor of onions and potatoes and turnips.

"Doesn't it make you ravenous?" he asked. "Wouldn't you like to have some real solid food to set your teeth into? Raw eggs and apples—ugh!"

"Yes, it does," said the girl, who had been contemplating the scene with dreamy eyes, scarcely speaking all the afternoon. "The French still wear red trousers and long, bulky blue coats," she added in a low voice.

"Visible a mile away—while these fellows melt into the ground at a hundred yards. If Germany wins, it will be through forethought."

"But she can't win!" protested the girl fiercely. "She must not win! You, my friend, must fight with me on France's side!"

"If nobody fights any harder than I can—"

She stopped him with a hand upon his arm.

"Ah, but you are fighting well! One can fight in other ways than with a rifle. One can fight with one's brains."

"It is your brains, not mine, that have done the fighting in this campaign," Stewart pointed out.

"Where should I have been but for

you? Dead, most probably, and my message lost."

He placed his hand quietly over hers and held it fast.

"Let us be clear, then," he said. "It is not for any abstract cause or ideal that I am fighting. It is for you—for your friendship, for your—"

"No, it is for France," she broke in. "I am not worth fighting for—I am but one girl among many millions. And if we win—if we get through—"

She paused, gazing out through the gathering darkness with starry eyes.

"Yes—if we get through," he prompted.

"It will mean more to France than many regiments!" She struck the pocket which contained the letters. "Ah, we must get through—we must not fail!" She rose and stretched her arms high above her head. "Dear God, you will not let us fail!" she cried. Then she turned and held out a hand to him. "Come," she said quietly; "if we are to get across, it must be before the moon rises."

CHAPTER XIII

THE PASSAGE OF THE MEUSE

THE mist of early evening had settled over the river and wiped away every vestige of the army, save the flaring lights of the camp-kitchens and the white lamps of the motors; but the creaking of wheels, the pounding of engines, and the regular tramp of countless feet told that the German advance had not slackened for a single instant.

On the uplands there was still a little light. Stewart and his companion picked their way cautiously down through a belt of woodland, across a rough field, and over a wall, beyond which they found an uneven path, made evidently by a vanished herd as it went back and forth to its pasture. They advanced slowly and silently, every sense on the alert. Seemingly no pickets had been posted on this side, from which there was no reason to fear an attack, and they were soon down amid the mist, at the edge of the encampment.

Here, however, there were sentries—a close line of them; the fugitives could see them dimly outlined against the fires, and could hear their interchange of challenges.

"It is impossible to get through here," whispered the girl. "Let us go on until

we are below the bridge. Perhaps we shall find a gap there."

So, hand in hand, lest they should become separated in the darkness, they worked their way cautiously down-stream, just out of sight of the line of sentries—who, be it said, rarely took the trouble to glance into the darkness.

"Wait!" whispered Stewart suddenly.

"What is that ahead?"

Something tall and black and vaguely menacing loomed above them into the night.

"The church tower!" breathed the girl after a moment. "See, there are ruins all about it—it is the village they burned."

They hesitated. Should they enter it, or try to go around? There was something sinister and threatening about these roofless, blackened walls which had once been homes; but to go around meant climbing cliffs, meant breathless scrambling—above all, meant loss of time.

"We must risk it," said the girl at last. "We can come back if the place is guarded."

Their hands instinctively tightened their clasp as they stole forward into the shadow of the houses, along what had once been a street, but was now littered and blocked with fallen walls and debris of every kind. Everywhere there was the stench of half-burned wood, and another stench, more penetrating, more nauseating.

Stewart felt his companion's hand squeeze his and drag him suddenly against a wall.

"Down, down!" she breathed, and they cowered behind a mass of fallen masonry.

Then Stewart peered out cautiously. Yes, there was some one coming. Far down the street ahead of them a tiny light flashed, disappeared, flashed again, and disappeared.

Crowding close together, they buried themselves deeper in the ruins and waited.

At last they could hear steps—slow, cautious steps, full of fear—and the light appeared again, dancing from side to side. It seemed to be a lantern, carefully shaded, so that only a narrow beam of light escaped; and that beam was sent dancing from side to side along the street, in dark corners, under fallen doorways.

Suddenly it stopped, and Stewart's heart leaped sickeningly as he saw that the beam rested on a face—a white face, staring up with sightless eyes. The light approached

and hung above it. A living hand caught up the dead one, on which there was the gleam of gold; a knife flashed—

And then, from the darkness almost beside them, four darts of flame stabbed toward the kneeling figure, and the ruins rocked with a great explosion.

When Stewart opened his eyes again he saw a squad of soldiers, each armed with an electric torch, standing about the body of the robber of the dead, while their corporal emptied his pockets. There were rings—one still encircling a severed finger—a watch, and money. The corporal gathered the booty into his handkerchief, tied the ends together with a satisfied grunt, and gave a gruff command. The lights vanished, and the squad stumbled ahead into the darkness.

There was a moment's silence. Stewart's nerves were quivering so convulsively that he could scarcely control them. He could feel his mouth twitching.

"We can't go on," he muttered. "We must go back. This is too horrible, it is unbearable!"

Together they stole tremblingly out of the ruin, along the littered street, past the church tower, across the road, over the wall, back into the clean fields. There they flung themselves down gaspingly side by side.

How sweet the smell of the earth after the stench of the looted town! How calm and lovely the stars!

Stewart, staring up at them, felt a great serenity descend upon him. After all, what did it matter to the universe, this trivial disturbance upon our tiny planet? Men might kill one another, nations disappear; but the planets would swing on in their courses, the constellations go their predestined ways. Of what significance was man in the great scheme of things? How absurd the pomp of kings and kaisers, how grotesque their assumption of greatness!

A stifled sob startled him. He groped quickly for his comrade, and found her lying prone, her face buried in her arms. He drew her close and held her as he might have held a child. After all, she was scarcely more than that—a child, delicate and sensitive. As a child might, she pillowed her head upon his breast and lay there sobbing softly.

But the sobs ceased presently; he could feel how she struggled for self-control;

and at last she turned in his arms and lay staring up at the heavens.

"That's right," he said. "Look up at the stars! That helps!" and it seemed to him, in spite of the tramp of feet, the rattle of wheels, and the curses of savage drivers, that they were alone together in the midst of things, and that nothing else mattered.

"How sublime they are!" she whispered. "How they calm and strengthen one! They seem to understand!" She turned her face and looked at him. "You, too, have understood!" she said very softly; then gently disengaged his arms and sat erect. "Now we must be going!"

Without a word Stewart released her. She sat still an instant, her warm hand on his. Then she rose quickly.

"We must go back the way we came," she said; and they set out again along the edge of the army, stumbling across rough fields, crouching behind hedges, turning aside to avoid a lighted house where some officers were making merry. For perhaps a mile they pressed on, with a line of sentries always at their right, outlined against the gleam of scattered lights. Then, quite suddenly, there were no more lights, and they knew that they had reached the limit of the encampment.

Had they also reached the limit of the line of sentries? There was no way to make sure; but they crept forward to the wall along the highway and peered cautiously over. The road seemed empty. They crossed it as swiftly and silently as shadows, and in a moment were safe behind the wall on the other side.

Beyond it lay the yard of an iron-foundry, with great piles of castings scattered about and a tall building looming at their left. In front of it they caught the gleam of a sentry's rifle; so they bore away to the right until they reached the line of the railway running close along the river-bank.

There were sentries here, too, but they were stationed far apart and apparently were half asleep, and the fugitives had no difficulty in slipping between them. A moment later they had scrambled down a steep bank and stood at the edge of the river.

"And now," whispered Stewart, "to get across!"

He looked out across the stream, some hundred yards in width, and flowing strong

and deep, for this stream which was holding the Germans back had its origin away southward in the heart of France, and must yet go many miles before it reached the sea.

"If we could find a boat!" he said. "We saw plenty of them this afternoon."

"We dare not use a boat," the girl objected. "We should be seen and fired upon."

"Do you mean to swim?" Stewart demanded.

"Be more careful!" she cautioned. "Some one may hear us." She drew him down into the shadow of the bank. "Unfortunately, I cannot swim, but no doubt you can."

"I'm not what would be called an expert, but I think I could swim across this river. However, I absolutely refuse to try to take you over. It would be too great a risk."

"If we had a plank or log, I could hold on while you pushed it along. If you grew tired you could rest and drift a while."

Stewart considered the plan. It seemed feasible. A drifting plank would attract no attention from the shore—the river was full of debris from the operations around Liège—and, whether they got over or not, there would be no danger of either of them drowning. And they ought to get over, for it would be no great task to work a plank across the stream.

"Yes, I think I could do that," he said at last. "Let us see if we can find a plank."

There was nothing of the sort along the shore, though they searched it for some distance; but opposite the foundry they came upon a pile of the square wooden sand-boxes in which castings are made. When Stewart saw them he chuckled with satisfaction.

"Just the thing!" he said. "Providence is evidently on our side to-night."

"I hope so!" breathed the girl, and between them they carried one of the boxes down to the edge of the water.

Then, after a moment's hesitation, Stewart sat down and began to take off his shoes.

"We shall have to get rid of our superfluous clothing," he said in the most matter-of-fact tone he could muster. "There is nothing heavier than clothes when they get wet. Besides, we've got to keep them dry if we can. We should almost freeze to

death after we left the water, and they would betray us a mile off."

The girl stood for a moment staring out across the river. Then she sat down with her back to him.

"You are quite right," she agreed, and bent above her shoes.

"We'll turn the box upside down and put our clothes upon it, like freight on a raft," went on Stewart cheerfully. "They will keep dry there. The water isn't very cold, probably, but we shall be mighty glad to get into dry things when we get out of it."

She did not answer, and Stewart went rapidly on with his undressing. When that was finished he rolled his clothes into a compact bundle inside his coat and tied the sleeves together.

"Now I'm going to launch the boat," he said. "Roll your clothes up inside your coat, so that nothing white will show, and wade out to me as soon as you are ready."

"Very well," she answered in a low tone.

With his bundle under one arm, Stewart turned the box over and dragged it into the river. He had been shivering in the night air, but the water was agreeably warm. Placing his bundle upon the top of the box, he pushed it before him, out into the stream, and was soon breast-deep. Then, holding the box against the current, he waited.

What was delaying her? Why did she not come? He could not see the shore, but he strained his eyes toward it, wondering if he should go back, if anything had happened.

Then, from the mist along the bank, a white figure emerged, dim and ghostlike in the darkness, and he heard a gentle splashing as she came toward him through the water. He raised his arm, to make certain that she saw him, then turned his head away.

Near and nearer came the splashing; then the box rocked gently as she placed her clothing on it.

"All right?" he asked softly.

"Yes," she answered, and he turned to find her sweet, appealing face looking up at him from the level of the water, which came just beneath her chin.

"Have you got a firm hold of the handle?"

"Yes."

He assured himself that both bundles of clothing were secure.

"All ready, then," he said. "Just hold on and let your body float out in the water. Don't hold your head too high, and if you feel your hands slipping call me at once. I don't want to lose you, little comrade!"

"I will remember," she said, smiling up at him.

"Then here we go."

He pushed the box slowly out into the stream. In a moment the water was at his chin.

"All right?" he asked again.

"Yes."

He took another step forward; the current caught him and lifted him off his feet, and he began to swim easily and slowly. He was not sure of his strength, it was a long time since he had done any serious swimming, and he knew that he must husband himself. Then, too, the current was stronger than it had seemed from the shore, and he found that he could make headway against it but slowly, for the box was of an awkward shape and the girl's body trailing behind it so much dead weight.

"Slow but sure," he said reassuringly, resting a moment. "You're quite all right?"

"Yes. You mustn't worry about me."

He glanced back at the shore, where the lights of the camp shone dimly through the mist.

"We're going to drift past the camp," he said; "but they can't see us, and it will make our landing safer if we come out below the troops. It would be rather embarrassing, wouldn't it, if we found a patrol waiting for us on the shore? Now for another swim!"

He pushed ahead until he found himself beginning to tire, then stopped and looked around.

"There's the bridge!" he said suddenly.

And, sure enough, just ahead they could see its dim shape spanning the stream. A cold fear gripped Stewart's heart. Suppose they should be swept against one of the abutments, and the box shattered to fragments?

"Take tight hold with both hands," he cautioned. "Don't let go, whatever happens!"

He swung himself round to the front of the box and tried to pierce the gloom

ahead. The center of the stream would be clear, he told himself, and they must be nearly in the center. Then he heard the confused tread of many feet, the current seemed to quicken, and he glanced up to see that they were almost beneath the bridge. Yes, the stream ahead was clear; but what were those lights down along the water?

And then he saw that a boat was moored there, and that men were strengthening the supports with which the engineers had hastily repaired the shattered abutment.

With frenzied energy he pulled the box around so that his companion's head was hidden behind it; then, with only his nose out, he floated silently on. They would not see him, he told himself; they were too busily at work. Even if they did, they could make nothing of this rough shape sweeping down the river.

Nevertheless, as they came within the circle of light cast by the flaring torches, Stewart, taking a deep breath, let himself sink below the surface; and not until the blood was singing in his ears did he come up again.

They had passed. They were safe! He drew a deep breath. Then he peered around the box.

"Are you there? Are you all right?"

"Yes," came the soft answer. "Never tell me again that you are not a fighter!"

"Compliments are barred until we are safe in France!" he reminded her gaily.

"But it's clear sailing now."

He struck out again, pushing diagonally forward toward the bank which he could not see, but which could not be far away. This was not going to prove such a desperate adventure, after all. The worst was over, for, once on land, far below the German troops, they had only to push forward to find themselves among friends.

Then his heart stood still as a shrill scream rent the night—a woman's scream of deadly horror—and he swiftly turned his head, to find that his comrade was no longer there.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST DASH

NEVER will Stewart forget the stark horror of that instant; never afterward did he think of it without a shudder. It was one of those instants—fortunately few—

which stamp themselves indelibly upon the brain, which penetrate the spirit, which leave a mark not to be effaced.

It was the flash of her white arm, as she sank for the second time, that saved her. Instinctively Stewart clutched at it, seized it, regained the box at a vigorous stroke, threw one arm across a handle, and raised her head above the water.

Her face was white as death, her eyes were closed, she hung a dead weight upon his arm—and yet, Stewart told himself, she could not have drowned in so short a time, for she had been under water only a few seconds. Perhaps she had been wounded—but he had heard no shot. His teeth chattered as he looked at her, she lay so still, so deathlike.

And then he remembered that shrill scream of utter horror. Why had she screamed? What was it that had wrung from her that terrible cry? Had some awful thing touched her, seized her, tried to drag her down?

Shivering with fear, Stewart looked out across the water. Was there something—some horror, perhaps—lurking in those depths?

He shook himself impatiently; he must not give way to his nerves. Holding her face back, he splashed some water into it, gently at first, then more violently. She was not dead; she had only fainted. A touch on her temple assured him that her heart was beating.

Something struck gently against his back—a piece of driftwood, perhaps; and then he was suddenly conscious that it was not driftwood, that it was soft, hairy—

He spun around, to find himself staring down into a pair of unseeing eyes, set in a face so swollen and distorted as to be scarcely human. How he repressed the yell of terror that rose in his throat he never knew; but he repressed it somehow, and, creeping with horror, pushed the box quickly to one side.

The bloated body, caught in the swirl of his wake, turned and followed, with an appearance of malignant purpose which sent a chill up Stewart's spine. Kicking frenziedly, he held the box back against the current, and for an instant fancied that his hideous pursuer was holding back, too; but, after what seemed like a moment's hesitation, it drifted on down the stream and vanished in the darkness.

For a moment longer Stewart stared

after it, half expecting it to reappear and bear down upon him. Then, with an anguished breath of relief, he stopped swimming and looked down at the face upon his arm. So it was that horror that had beset her; she had felt it pushing against her, had turned as he had done, and—no wonder she had screamed!

He felt her bosom rise and fall with a quick gasp; then her eyes opened and gazed up at him. For an instant they gazed vacantly and wildly, then a flood of crimson swept from chin to brow, and she struggled to free herself from his encircling arm.

"Easy now!" Stewart protested. "Are you sure you're all right? Are you sure you're strong enough to hold on?"

"Yes, yes!" she panted. "Let me go!"

He guided her hands to the handles, assured himself that she grasped them firmly, then released her and swam to his old position on the other side of the box. For a moment they floated on in silence.

"How foolish of me!" she said at last in a choking voice. "I suppose you saved my life!"

"Oh, I just grabbed you by the arm and held on to you till you came to."

"Did I scream?"

"I should rather think so! Frightened me nearly to death!"

"I couldn't help it. I was terrified. It was—it was—"

"I know," said Stewart quickly. "I saw it. Don't think about it—it's gone on down-stream."

"It—it seemed to be following me!" she gasped.

"Yes, I had the same feeling; but it's away ahead of us now. Now, if you're all right, we'll work in toward the bank—it can't be far off. Hello, what's that?"

A shadowy shape emerged from the darkness shrouding the eastern bank, and they heard the rattle of oars in rowlocks.

"They heard you scream," said Stewart in a low voice. "They've sent out a patrol to investigate."

With all his strength he pushed on toward the farther bank. Suddenly a shaft of light shot from the bow of the boat out across the water, sweeping up and down, dwelling upon this piece of driftwood and upon that.

With a gasp of terror Stewart pushed the box round so that it screened them

from the search-light, and kept on swimming with all his strength.

"If they spot those bundles," he panted, "they'll be down upon us. Ah!"

The light was upon them. Above their heads, which were almost submerged, the box, the bundles of clothing, stood out as if silhouetted against the midday sky. Stewart cursed his folly in placing them there; surely wet clothes were preferable to capture. He should not have taken the risk; he should have put the clothing inside the box and let it take its chance. But it was too late now. In another moment—

The light swept on.

From sheer reaction Stewart's body dropped limply for an instant through the water, and then rebounded as if from an electric shock.

"I can touch bottom!" he said hoarsely. "We'll get there yet. Hold fast!"

Setting his teeth, he dragged the box toward the shore with all his strength. In a moment the water was only to his shoulders—to his chest—he could see that his comrade was wading, too.

He stopped, peering anxiously ahead. There was no light anywhere along the shore, and no sound broke the stillness.

"It seems all right," he whispered. "I will go ahead and make sure. If it is safe, you will hear me whistle. Keep behind the box, for fear that search-light may sweep this way again, and when I whistle, come straight out. You understand?"

"Yes."

"Good-by, then, for a moment, little comrade!"

"Good-by!"

He snatched up the bundle containing his clothing, and, crouching as low in the water as he could, set off cautiously toward the shore. There was a narrow strip of gravel just ahead, and behind that a belt of darkness which, he told himself, was a wood.

The beach was deserted, and, crossing it at a run, he assured himself that there was no ambush in the wood behind it. As he turned back to the water's edge he noticed a growing band of light over the hills to the east, and knew that the moon was rising. There was no time to lose! He whistled softly and began hastily to dress.

Low as the whistle was, it reached the boat—or perhaps it was mere chance that

brought the search-light sweeping round just as the girl rose in the water and started toward the shore. The light swept past her, swept back again, and stopped full upon the flying figure, as light and graceful as Diana's.

There came a hoarse shout from the boat, and the splash of straining oars; and then Stewart was dashing forward into the water, was by her side, had caught her hand, and was dragging her toward the bank.

"Go on! Go on!" he cried.

He stopped to pick up shoes and coat, for sharp gravel warned him that with unprotected feet flight would be impossible. Then he was up again and after her, across the cruel stones of the shore, toward the darkness of the wood and safety—one yard—two yards—

And always the search-light beat upon them mercilessly.

There came a roar of rifles from the river, a flash of flame, the whistle of bullets about his ears; and then they were in the wood, and he had her by the hand.

"Not hurt?" he gasped.

"No, no!"

"Thank Heaven! We are safe for a moment. Get on some clothes—especially your shoes. We can't run barefooted!"

He was fumbling with his own shoes as he spoke. He managed to thrust his bruised feet into them; he stuffed his socks into the pocket of his coat, and slipped into it.

"Ready?" he asked.

"In a moment!" And then he felt her hand in his. "Which way?"

He glanced back through the trees. The boat was at the bank; its occupants were leaping out, rifles in hand; the search-light swept up and down.

"This way, I think," and he guided her diagonally to the right. "Go carefully! The less noise we make the better. But as long as those fellows keep on shooting, they can't hear us."

Away they went, stumbling, scrambling, bending low to escape the overhanging branches, saving each other from some ugly falls—up a long incline covered by an open wood, across a little glade, over a wall, through another strip of woodland, into a road, and over another wall. Here Stewart gave a gasp of relief, for they were in a field of grain.

"We shall be safe here," he said, as they

plunged into it. "I will watch, while you finish dressing"; and he faced back toward the way they had come.

The full moon was sailing high above the eastern hills, and he could distinctly see the wall they had just crossed, with the white road behind it, and beyond that the dense shadow of the wood. It was on the strip of road he kept his eyes, but no living creature crossed it. At last he felt a touch upon his arm.

"My turn now!" the girl whispered.

Stewart sat down upon the ground, drew on his socks, and laced his shoes properly. As he started to get up he felt a sudden sharp twinge in his shoulder.

"What is it?" asked the girl quickly, for an exclamation of pain had burst from him before he could choke it back.

"Nothing at all!" he said, and rose gingerly. "I touched a raw place, where a briar scratched me. I seem to be composed largely of raw places—especially as to my feet. How are yours?"

"One of them hurts a little—not enough to mention."

"You're sure you can walk?"

"Certainly—or run, if need be."

"Then we had better push on a little farther. The Germans are still too close for comfort. Keep your back to the moon—I'll act as rear-guard."

For a moment she looked up questioningly into his face.

"You're sure you're not hurt?" she asked.

"Perfectly sure."

"I was afraid you had been shot—I saw how you placed yourself between me and the river!"

"The merest accident," he assured her. "Besides, those fellows couldn't shoot."

She gazed up at him yet a moment, her lips quivering; then she turned and started westward through the field.

Falling in behind, Stewart explored his wounded shoulder gingerly with his fingers. He could feel that his shirt was wet with blood, but the stabbing pain had been succeeded by a sharp stinging, which convinced him that it was only a flesh-wound. Folding his shirt back, he found it at last, high in the shoulder above the collar-bone.

"That was lucky!" he told himself, as he folded a handkerchief over it, buttoned his shirt, and pushed on after his comrade. "An inch lower, and the bone would have been smashed!"

Away to the south they could hear the thunder of the Liège forts, and Stewart thought with a shudder of the poor fellows who had to face that deadly fire. No doubt a fresh attack was being made by the troops they had seen crossing the river. It was improbable that the invaders would push westward until the forts were reduced; so, when they came presently to a road which ran toward the northwest, they ventured to follow it.

"We had better hide somewhere and rest till daylight," Stewart suggested at last. "We have had a hard day."

He himself was nearly spent with fatigue and hunger, and his shoulder was stiff and very painful.

"Very well," the girl agreed. "I am very tired. Where shall we go?"

Stewart stopped and looked around him.

On one side of the road was a level pasture affording no shelter; on the other a rolling field mounted to a strip of woodland.

"At the edge of those trees would be the best place," he said.

Laboriously they clambered over the wall beside the road and set off toward this refuge. The field was very rough and seemed interminable, and more than once Stewart thought that he must drop where he stood; but they reached the wood at last, and threw themselves down beneath the first clump of undergrowth.

Stewart was asleep almost before he touched the ground; but the girl lay for some time with eyes open, staring up into the night. Then, very softly, she crawled to Stewart's side, raised herself on one elbow, and looked down into his face.

It was not at all the face of the man whom she had met at the Kölner Hof two days before. It was thinner and paler; there were dark circles of exhaustion under the eyes; a stubby beard covered the haggard cheeks, across one of which was an ugly scratch. Yet the girl seemed to find it beautiful. Her eyes filled with tears as she gazed at it; she lightly brushed back a lock of hair that had fallen over the forehead, and bent as if to press a kiss there—but stopped, with a quick shake of the head, and drew away.

"Not yet!" she whispered. "Not yet!"

Crawling a little way apart, she lay down again among the bushes.

Again Stewart awoke with the sun in his

eyes, and again, after a moment's confused blinking, he looked around to find himself alone. The dull pain in his shoulder, as he sat up, reminded him of his wound.

Crawling a little distance back among the bushes, he slipped out of his coat. His shirt was soaked with blood half-way down the right side—a good sign, Stewart told himself. He knew how great a show a little blood can make, and he was glad that the wound had bled freely.

He unbuttoned his shirt and gingerly pulled it back from the shoulder, for the blood had dried in places and stuck fast; then he removed the folded handkerchief, and the wound lay revealed.

He regarded it with satisfaction, for, as he had thought, it was not much more than a scratch. A bullet had grazed the collarbone, plowed through the muscle, and sped on its way, leaving behind, as the only sign of its passage, a tiny black mark.

"You are wounded!" cried a strangled voice. In an instant his comrade was on her knees beside him, her face pale, her lips working. "And you did not tell me! Oh, cruel, cruel!"

There was that in the voice, in the eyes, in the trembling lips, which sent Stewart's heart bounding into his throat. But, by a mighty effort, he kept his aching arms from around her.

"Nonsense!" he said, as lightly as he could. "That's not a wound—it is just a scratch. This one across my cheek hurts a great deal worse. If I could only wash it—"

"There is a little stream back yonder," she said, and sprang to her feet. "Come! Or perhaps you cannot walk!"

She put her arms around him to help him up. He rose with a laugh.

"Really," he protested, "I don't see how a scratch on the shoulder could affect my legs!"

But she refused to make a jest of it.

"The blood—it frightens me. Are you very weak?" she asked anxiously, holding tight to him, as if he might collapse at any instant.

"If I am," said Stewart, "it is from want of food, not from loss of blood. I haven't lost a spoonful. Ah, here's the brook!"

He knelt beside it, while she washed the blood from his handkerchief and tenderly bathed the injured shoulder. Stewart watched her with fast-beating heart. Sure-

ly she cared; surely there was more than friendly concern in that white face, in those quivering lips. Well, he would soon be able to put it to the touch. He trembled at the thought.

"Am I hurting you?" she asked anxiously, for she had felt him quiver.

"Not a bit; the cool water feels delightful. You see, it is only a scratch," he added, when the matted blood had been cleared away. "It will be quite well in two or three days. I sha'n't even have a scar. I think it might have left a scar! What's the use of being wounded, if one hasn't a scar to show for it? And I shall probably never be under fire again."

She smiled wanly, and a little color crept back into her face.

"How you frightened me!" she said. "I came through the bushes and saw you sitting there, all covered with blood! You might have told me—it was foolish to lie there all night without binding it up. Suppose you had bled to death!" She wrung out the handkerchief, shook it out in the breeze until it was nearly dry, and bound it tightly over the wound. "How does that feel?"

"It feels splendid. Really it does," he added, seeing that she regarded him doubtfully. "If I feel the least little twinge of pain in it, I will notify you instantly. I give you my word!"

They sat silent for a moment, gazing into each other's eyes. It was the girl who stirred first.

"I will go to the edge of the wood and reconnoiter," she said, rising a little unsteadily, "while you wash your hands and face. Or shall I stay and help?"

"No, thank you," said Stewart. "I think I am still able to wash my own face—that is, if you think it's any use to wash it!" He ran his fingers along his stubbly jaws. "Do you think you will like me with a beard?"

"With a beard or without one, it is all the same!" she answered softly, and slipped quickly away among the trees, leaving Stewart to make what he could of this cryptic utterance.

Despite his gnawing hunger, despite his stiff shoulder and sore muscles, he was very happy as he bent above the clear water, drank deep, and bathed hands and face. What a woman she was!

"What a scarecrow I am!" he said, when he rejoined his companion. He rue-

fully contemplated a long tear in his coat—merely the largest of half a dozen. "I lost my collar in that dash last night—I left it on the bank, and didn't dare stop to look for it. Even if we met the Germans now, there would be no danger—they would take us for tramps!"

"They certainly would," she laughed. "I know I look like a scarecrow; but you might have spared telling me!"

"You!" cried Stewart. "A scarecrow! Oh, no; you would attract the birds instead of frightening them away."

"There is a village over yonder," she said, turning away. "We can get something to eat there, and find out where we are. Listen! What is that?"

Away to the south a dull rumbling shook the horizon—a mighty shock, as of an earthquake.

"The Germans have got their siege-guns into position," he said. "They are attacking Liège again."

Yes, there could be no doubt of it; murder and desolation were stalking across the country to the south; men were killing men in the horror known as "war." But nothing could be more peaceful than the fields which stretched before them.

"There is no danger here," said Stewart, and led the way down across the rough pasture to the road.

As he mounted the wall, moved by some strange uneasiness, he stopped to look back toward the east; but the road stretched white and empty until it plunged into a strip of woodland a mile away.

Somehow he was not reassured. With that strange uneasiness still weighing on him, a sense of oppression, as of an approaching storm, he sprang down beside the girl, and they set off westward side by side. At first they could not see the village, which was hid by a spur of rising ground; then, at a turn of the road, they found it close in front of them.

But the road was blocked with fallen trees, strung with barbed wire—and what was that queer embankment of fresh, yellow earth which stretched to right and left?

"The Belgians!" cried the girl. "Come! We are safe at last!" and she started to run forward.

But only for an instant. As if that cry of hers was an awaited signal, there came a crash of musketry from the wooded ridge to the right, and an answering crash from the crest of the embankment; and Stewart

saw that light and speeding figure spin half round, collapse, and fall limply to the road.

CHAPTER XV

DISASTER

He was beside her in an instant, his arm around her, raising her. He scarcely heard the guns; he scarcely heard the whistle of the bullets; he knew only, as he knelt there in the road, that his little comrade had been stricken down.

Where was she wounded? Not in the head, thank Heaven! Not in the throat, so white and delicate. The body, perhaps; and he tore aside the coat—

She opened her eyes and looked at him.

"What is it?" she asked.

"You've been hit," he panted. "Do you feel pain?"

She closed her eyes for an instant.

"No," she answered; "but my left leg is numb, as if—"

"Pray Heaven it's only in the leg! I must get you somewhere out of this."

He raised his head to look around, and was suddenly conscious of the banging guns. The ridges on either side were rimmed with fire. He cast a glance behind him, and his heart stood still, for a troop of Uhlans was deploying into the road. Forward, then, to the village, since that was the only way!

He stooped to lift her.

"I may hurt you a little," he said.

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to carry you to the village. Here, wave my handkerchief to show that we are friends"; and he thrust it into her hand. "Now, your arm about my neck."

She obeyed mutely; then, as he straightened up, she saw, over his shoulder, the cavalry forming for a charge.

"No, no!" she cried. "Put me down. Here are the letters. See, I am putting them into your pocket. Now, put me down and save yourself!"

He was picking his way forward over the barbed wire. He dared not lift his eyes from the road, even for a glance at her.

"Be still!" he commanded. "Don't struggle so! I will not put you down. Wave the handkerchief!"

"There is cavalry down yonder," she protested wildly. "It will charge in a moment!"

"I know it. That's one reason why I will not put you down!"

He was past the wire; he could look at her for an instant—into her eyes, so close to his; deep into her eyes, dark with fear and pain.

"Another reason is," he said deliberately, "that I love you! I'm telling you now because I want you to know, if this should be the end. I love you, love you, love you!"

He was forced to look away from her, for there were fallen trees in front, but he felt the arm around his neck tighten.

And then he bent his head and kissed her.

"Like that," he said hoarsely; "only a thousand times more than that—a million times more than that!"

She pulled herself up until her cheek was pressed to his; and her eyes were like twin stars.

"And I!" she whispered. "A million times more than that. Oh, my prince, my lover!"

Stewart's veins ran fire. He threw back his head—what fate could harm him now?

"And yet you wanted me to put you down!" he mocked.

She snuggled against him, warm and womanly; she gave herself to him.

"Oh, hold me close!" she seemed to say; "hold me close, close! I am yours now!"

"Wave the handkerchief!" he added. "We're getting near the barricade. Life is too sweet to end just yet!"

She smiled up into his eyes, and waved the handkerchief at arm's length above their heads. Stewart, glancing up, saw a row of heads in queer black shakos peering curiously down from the top of the barricade.

"They have seen us!" he said. "They're not firing. They understand that we are friends. Courage, little comrade!"

"I'm not afraid," she smiled. "And I love that name—little comrade!"

"Here are the last entanglements, and then we're through. What is the cavalry doing?"

She gave a little cry as she looked back along the road. At the same instant Stewart heard the thunder of galloping hoofs.

"They are coming!" she screamed.

"Oh, put me down! Put me down!"

"Not I!" gasped Stewart between his teeth, and glanced over his shoulder.

The Uhlans were charging in solid mass,

their lances couched. There was just one chance of escaping them. Stewart, holding the girl close, leaped into the ditch beside the road and threw himself flat against the ground, shielding her with his body.

In an instant the thunder of the charge was upon him. Then, high above the rattle of guns, rose the shouts of men, the screams of horses, the savage shock of the encounter. Something rolled upon him and lay quivering against him—a wounded man—a dead one, perhaps—in any event, he told himself grimly, so much added protection. Pray Heaven that a maddened horse did not tramp them down!

The tumult died, the firing slackened. What was that? A burst of cheering?

Stewart ventured to raise his head and look about him. With a gasp he threw off the weight, caught up his companion, and staggered to his feet. Yes; it was a body which had fallen upon him. It rolled slowly over on its back as he rose, and he saw a ghastly wound right between the eyes.

"They have been repulsed!" he panted. "Wave the handkerchief!" With his heart straining in his throat, he clambered out of the ditch and staggered on. "Don't look!" he added, for the road was strewn with horrors. "Don't look!"

She gazed up at him, smiling calmly.

"I shall look only at you, my lover!" she said softly.

Stewart tightened his grip and held her close.

There was the barricade, with cheering men upon it, exposing themselves with utter recklessness to the bullets which still whistled from right and left. Stewart felt his knees trembling. Could he reach it? Could he lift his foot over this entanglement? Could he possibly step across this body?

Suddenly he felt his burden lifted from him and a strong arm thrown about his shoulders.

"Friends!" he gasped. "We're friends!"

Then he heard the girl's clear voice speaking in rapid French, and men's voices answering eagerly. The mist cleared a little from before his eyes, and he found that the arm about his shoulders belonged to a little Belgian soldier who was leading him past one end of the barricade, close

behind another who bore the girl in his arms.

At the other side an officer stopped them.

"Who are you?" he asked in French. "From where do you come?"

"We are friends," said the girl. "We have fled from Germany. We have both been wounded."

"Yes," said Stewart, and showed his blood-stained shirt. "Mine is only a scratch, but my comrade needs attention."

A sudden shout from the top of the barricade told that the Uhlans were forming for another charge.

"You must look out for yourselves," said the officer. "I will hear your story later"; and he bounded back to his place beside his men.

The soldier who was carrying the girl dropped her abruptly into Stewart's arms and followed his captain. In an instant the firing recommenced.

Stewart looked wildly about him. He was in a village street, with close-built houses on either side.

"I must find a cart," he gasped, "or something—"

His breath failed him, but he staggered on. The mist was before his eyes again, his tongue seemed dry and swollen.

Suddenly the arm about his neck relaxed, the head fell back. He cast one haggard glance down into the white face, then turned through the nearest doorway. Perhaps she was wounded more seriously than he had thought. He must see—he must make sure—

He found himself in a tiled passage, opening into a low-ceilinged room lighted by a single window. For an instant, in the partial darkness, he stared blindly; then he saw a low settle against the farther wall, and upon this he gently laid his burden.

Before he could catch himself he had fallen heavily to the floor, and lay there for a moment, too weak to rise. But the weakness passed; with lips compressed, he pulled himself to his knees, got out his knife, found, with his fingers, the stain of blood above the wound, and quickly ripped away the cloth.

The bullet had passed through the thickness of the thigh, leaving a tiny puncture. With a sob of thankfulness, he realized that the wound was not dangerous. Blood was still oozing slowly from it—it must be washed and dressed.

He found a pail of water in the kitchen, snatched a sheet from a bed in another room, and set to work. The familiar labor steadied him, the mists cleared, his muscles again obeyed his will, the sense of exhaustion passed.

"It is only a scratch!" whispered a voice, and he turned sharply to find her smiling up at him. "It is just a scratch like yours,"

"It is much more than a scratch," he said sternly. "You must lie still, or you will start the bleeding."

"Tyrant!" she retorted, and then she raised her head and looked to see what he was doing. "Oh, is it there?" she said in surprise. "I didn't feel it there!"

"Where did you feel it?" Stewart demanded.

"It seemed to me to be somewhere below the knee."

Compressing his lips, Stewart bandaged the wound with some strips torn from the sheet. Then he ran his fingers down over the calf, and brought them away stained with blood. He caught up his knife and ripped the cloth clear down.

"Really," she protested, "I sha'n't have any clothes at all left, if you keep on like that. I don't see how I am going to appear in public, as it is!"

He grimly washed the blood away without replying, and then, on either side of the calf, found a tiny black spot where the second bullet had passed through.

"These German bullets seem to be about the size of nails," he remarked, as he bandaged the wound. He raised his head and listened, as the firing outside rose to a furious crescendo. "They're at it again!" he added. "We must be getting out of this!"

She reached up, caught him by the coat, and drew him down to her.

"Listen," she said. "The letters are in your pocket. Should we be separated—"

"We will not be separated," he broke in impatiently. "Do you suppose I would permit anything to separate us now?"

"I know, dear one," she said softly. "But if we should be, you will carry the letters to General Joffre? Oh, do not hesitate!" she cried. "Promise me! They mean so much to me—my life's work—all my ambitions—all my hopes—"

"Very well," he said. "I promise."

"You have not forgotten the signs and the formula?"

"No."

She passed an arm about his neck and drew him still closer.

"Kiss me!" she whispered.

And Stewart, shaken, transported, deliriously happy, pressed his lips to hers in a long, close, passionate embrace.

At last she drew her arm away.

"I am very tired," she whispered, smiling dreamily up at him; "and very, very happy. I do not believe I can go on, dear one."

"I will get a wagon of some kind—a hand-cart, if nothing better. There must be ambulances somewhere about."

He paused, listening, for the firing at the barricade had started furiously again.

"I will be back in a moment," he said.

He ran to the street door and looked out. As he did so a wounded soldier hobbled past, using his rifle as a crutch.

"How goes it?" Stewart inquired in French.

"We hold them off," answered the soldier, smiling cheerfully, though his face was drawn with pain.

"Will they break through?"

"No. Our reinforcements are coming up"; and the little soldier hobbled away down the street.

"I should have asked him where the ambulances are," thought Stewart. He glanced again toward the barricade. The firing had slackened; evidently the assailants had again been repulsed. Yes, there was time, and he darted down the street after the limping soldier. He was at the Belgian's side in a moment.

"Where are the ambulances?" he asked wildly.

The soldier, turning to reply, glanced back along the street and his face went livid.

"Ah!" he groaned. "Look yonder!"

Looking, Stewart beheld a gray-blue flood pouring over the barricade, beheld the flash of reddened bayonets, beheld the little band of Belgians swept backward. With a cry of anguish, he rushed toward them along the street, and in an instant the tide was upon him. He fought against it furiously, striking, cursing, praying.

Suddenly he found himself face to face with the Belgian officer, blood-stained, demoniac, shouting encouragement to his men. His eyes flashed with amazement when he saw Stewart.

"Go back! Go back!" he shouted.

"My comrade is back there!" panted Stewart, and tried to pass.

But the officer caught his arm.

"Madman!" he cried. "It is death to go that way."

"What is that to me?" demanded Stewart, and wrenched his arm away.

The officer watched him for an instant, then turned away with a shrug. After all, he reflected, it was none of his affair; his task was to hold the Germans back, and he threw himself into it.

"Steady, men!" he shouted. "Steady! Our reserves are coming!"

And his men cheered and held a firm front, though it cost them dear—so firm and steady that Stewart found he could not get past it, but was carried back foot by foot, too exhausted to resist, entangled hopelessly in the retreat. The Germans pressed forward, filling the street from side to side, compact, irresistible.

And then the Belgians heard behind them the sound of shouts and the roll of wheels, and their captain, glancing back, saw that a machine gun had been posted in the middle of the street.

"Steady, men!" he shouted. "We have them now! Steady till I give the word!" He glanced back again and caught the gunners' signal. "Now! To the side and back!" he screamed.

The men, with a savage cheer, sprang to right and left, into doorways, close against the walls, and the gun, with a purr of delight, let loose its lightnings into the advancing horde.

Stewart, who had been swept aside with the others, without understanding what was happening, gasping, rubbing his eyes, staring down the street, saw the blue-gray line suddenly stop and crumple up. Then, with a savage yell, it dashed forward and stopped again. He saw an officer raise his sword, then fall crashing to the street; he saw that instant of indecision which is fatal to any charge; and then stark terror ran through the ranks, and they turned to flee.

But the pressure from the rear cut off escape in that direction. The human flood burst into the houses on either side, swept through them, out across the fields and away. And steadily the little gun purred on, as if reveling in its awful work, until the street was clear.

Though they had suffered terribly, the Germans were not yet routed. A remnant

of them held together behind the houses at the end of the street, and still others took up a position behind the barricade and swept the street with their rifles.

The little officer bit his lip in perplexity as he looked about at his company, so sadly reduced in numbers. Should he try to retake the barricade with a rush, or should he wait for reenforcements? He loved his men—surely they had more than played their part. Then his eye was caught by a figure which dodged from doorway to doorway.

"That madman again!" he muttered, and watched, expecting every instant to see him fall.

For Stewart had not waited for the captain's decision. Almost before the Germans turned to flee, he was creeping low along the wall, dodging from doorway to doorway. The whistle of the machine gun's bullets filled the street. One nipped him across the wrist, another grazed his arm, and then, as the Germans rallied, he saw ahead of him the flashes from their rifles.

He was not afraid; indeed, he was strangely calm. He was quite certain that he would not be killed; others might fall, but not he. Others—yes, here they were; dozens, scores, piled from wall to wall. For here was where the machine gun had caught the German advance and smote it down. They lay piled one upon another—young men, all of them; some lying with arms flung wide, staring blindly up at the sky; a few moaning feebly, knowing only that they suffered; two or three trying to pull themselves from beneath the heap of dead; one coward burrowing deeper into it.

Stewart could hear the thud, thud of the bullets from either end of the street as they struck the mass of bodies, dead and wounded alike, until there were no longer any wounded; until even the coward lay still!

Sick and dizzy, he pushed on. Was this the house? The door stood open, and he stepped inside and looked around. No, this was not it.

The next one, perhaps—all these houses looked alike from the street. As he reached the door a swirl of acrid smoke beat into his face. He looked out quickly. The barricade was obscured by smoke; dense masses rolled out of the houses on either side. The Germans had fired the village!

Into the next house Stewart staggered—vainly; and into the next. He could hear the crackling of the flames; the smoke grew thicker.

Into the next!

He knew it the instant he crossed the threshold; yes, this was the entry, this was the room, there was the settle.

He stopped, staring, gasping. The settle was empty.

Slowly he stepped forward, gazing about him. Yes, there was the bucket of water on the floor, just as he had left it; there were the blood-stained rags; there was the torn sheet; but the settle was empty.

He threw himself beside it and ran his hands over it, to be sure that his eyes were not deceiving him. No; it was empty.

He ran into the next room and the next. He ran all through the house calling:

"Comrade! Little comrade!"

But there was no reply. The rooms were empty, one and all.

Half suffocated, palsied with despair, he reeled back to the room where he had left her and stared about it. Could he be mistaken? No; there was the bucket, there were the bandages. But what was that black stain in the middle of the white, sanded floor? He drew close and looked at it. It was blood.

Still staring, he backed away. Blood—whose blood? Not hers! Not his little comrade's!

And suddenly his strength fell from him; he staggered and dropped helplessly to his knees.

This was the end, then—this was the end. There on the settle was where she had lain; it was there she had drawn him down for that last caress; and the letters—ah, they would never be delivered now!

But at least he could die there, with his head where hers had been.

Blinded, choking, he dragged himself forward—ah, here was the place!

"Little comrade!" he murmured. "Little comrade!"

And he fell forward across the settle, his face buried in his arms, while a choking cloud of smoke swept into the room.

CHAPTER XVI

STEWART FULFILLS HIS TRUST

WHEN Stewart opened his eyes again, it was to find himself looking up into a good-

humored face, which he did not at first recognize. It was brown and dirty; there was a three days' growth of beard upon cheeks and chin, and a deep red scratch ran across the man's forehead; but the eyes were bright and the lips smiling, as of a man superior to every fortune. Stewart recognized the little Belgian captain whose troops had defended the village.

Instantly memory surged back upon him—memory bitter and painful. He raised his head and looked about him. He was lying under a clump of trees not far from the bank of a little stream, along which a company of Belgian soldiers were busy throwing up entrenchments.

"Ah, so you are better!" said the captain in his clipped French. His eyes beamed with satisfaction. "That is good! A little more of that smoke, and it would have been all over with you!"

He gestured toward the eastern horizon, above which hung a black and threatening cloud.

Stewart pulled himself to a sitting posture and stared for a moment at the cloud as it billowed in the wind. Then he passed his hand before his eyes and stared again. Suddenly all his strength seemed to go from him, and he lay quietly down again.

"So bad as that!" said the officer sympathetically, struck by the whiteness of his face. "And I have nothing to give you—not a swallow of wine—not a sip!"

"It will pass," said Stewart hoarsely. "I shall be all right presently. But I do not understand French very well. Do you speak English?"

"A little," answered the other, and spoke thereafter in a mixture of French and English, which Stewart found intelligible, but which need not be indicated here.

"Will you tell me what happened?" Stewart asked at last.

"Ah, we drove them out!" cried the captain, his face gleaming. "My men behaved splendidly—they are brave boys, as you yourself saw. We made it—how you say?—too hot for the Germans; but we could not remain. They were pushing up in force on every side, and they had set fire to the place. So we took up our wounded and fell back. At the last moment I happen to remember that I had seen you dodging along the street in face of the German fire, so I look for you in

this house and in that. At last I find you in a room full of smoke, lying across a bench, and I bring you away. Now we wait for another attack. It will come soon—our scouts have seen the Germans preparing to advance. Then we fight as long as we can and kill as many as we can, and then give back to a new position. That, over and over again, will be our part in this war—to hold them until France has time to strike. But I pity my poor country!"

The Belgian's face grew dark.

"There will be little left of her," he went on, "when those barbarians have finished. They are astounded that we fight, that we dare oppose them; they are maddened that we hold them back, for time means everything to them. They revenge themselves by burning our villages and killing defenseless people. Ah, well, they shall pay! Tell me, my friend," he added in another tone, "why did you risk death in that reckless fashion? Why did you kneel beside that bench?"

"It was there I left my comrade," Stewart answered brokenly, his face convulsed. "She was wounded—she could not walk—I went to look for a cart—for an ambulance—I had scarcely taken a step when the Germans swept over the barricade and into the town. When I got back to the house where I had left her she was not there."

"Ah!" said the other, looking down at Stewart thoughtfully. "It was a woman, then?"

"Yes."

"Your wife?"

"She had promised to become my wife"; and Stewart looked at the other steadily.

"You are an American, are you not?"

"Yes—I have my passport."

"And *madame*—was she also an American?"

"No, she was a Frenchwoman. She was shot twice in the leg as we ran toward your barricade—seriously—it was quite impossible for her to walk. But when I got back to the house she was not there. What had happened to her?"

His companion gazed out over the meadows and shook his head.

"You looked in the other rooms?" he asked.

"Everywhere—all through the house—she was not there! Ah, and I remember now," he added, struggling to a sitting

posture, his face more livid, if possible, than it had been before. "There was a great blood-stain on the floor that was not there when I left her. How could it have got there? I cannot understand!"

Again the officer shook his head, his eyes still on the billowing smoke.

"It is very strange," he murmured.

"I must go back!" cried Stewart. "I must search for her!"

He tried to rise. The other put out a hand to stop him, but drew it back, seeing it unnecessary.

"Impossible!" he said. "You see, you cannot even stand!"

"I have had nothing to eat since yesterday," Stewart explained. "Then only some eggs and apples. If I could get some food—"

He broke off, his chin quivering helplessly. He was very near to tears.

"Even if you could walk," the other pointed out, "even if you were quite strong, it would still be impossible. The Germans have burned the village; they are now on this side of it. If *madame* is still alive, she is safe. Barbarians as they are, they would not kill a woman."

"Oh, you don't know!" groaned Stewart. "You don't know! They would kill her without compunction!"

Weakness and hunger and despair were too much for him. He threw himself forward on his face, shaken by great sobs.

The little officer sat quite still, his face very sad. There was no glory in war—that was merely a fiction to hold soldiers to their work; it was all horrible, detestable, inhuman. He had seen brave men killed, torn, mutilated; he had seen inoffensive people driven from their homes and left to starve; he had seen women weeping for their husbands and children for their fathers; he had seen terror stalk across the quiet countryside—famine, want, despair!

The paroxysm passed, and Stewart gradually regained his self-control.

"You will, of course, do as you think best," said his companion at last; "but I could perhaps be of help if I knew more. How do you come to be in these rags? Why was *madame* dressed as a man? Why should the Germans kill her? These are things that I should like to know; but you will tell me as much or as little as you please."

Before he was well aware of it, so

hungry was he for comfort, Stewart found himself embarked upon the story. It flowed from his lips so rapidly, so brokenly, as poignant memory stabbed through him, that more than once his listener stopped him and asked him to repeat. For the rest, he sat staring out at the burning village, his eyes bright, his hands clenched.

When the story was over he arose, faced the east, and saluted stiffly.

"*Madame!*" he said—and so paid her the highest tribute in a soldier's power.

Then he sat down again, and there was a moment's silence.

"What you have told me," he said slowly at last, "moves me beyond words. Believe me, I would advance this instant, I would risk my whole command, if I thought there was the slightest chance of rescuing that intrepid and glorious woman. But there is no chance. That village is held by at least a brigade."

"What could have happened?" asked Stewart again. "Where could she have gone?"

"I cannot imagine. I can only hope that she is safe. Most probably she has been taken prisoner. Even in that case, there is little danger that she will ever be recognized."

"But why should they take prisoner a wounded civilian?" Stewart persisted. "I cannot understand it, unless—"

His voice died in his throat, his face turned livid.

"Unless what?" asked the officer, turning on him quickly. "What is it you fear?"

"Unless she *was* recognized!" cried Stewart hoarsely.

But the other shook his head.

"If she had been recognized—which is most improbable—she would not have been taken prisoner at all. She would have been shot immediately."

And then again that dark stain upon the floor flashed before Stewart's eyes. Perhaps that had really happened. Perhaps that blood was hers!

"How can I learn her fate?" he groaned. "I must know the truth of it!"

"Yes," said the other gently, "it is the missing who cause the deepest anguish. One can only wait and hope and pray. That is all that you can do—that and one other thing."

"What other thing?" Stewart demanded.

"She entrusted you with a mission, did she not?" asked the little captain. "Living or dead, she would be glad to know that you fulfilled it, for it was very dear to her. You still have the letters?"

Stewart thrust his hand into his pocket and brought them forth.

"You are right," he said, and rose unsteadily. "Where can I find General Joffre?"

The other had risen, too, and was supporting him with a strong hand.

"That I do not know," he answered; "somewhere along the French frontier, no doubt, mustering his forces."

Stewart looked about him uncertainly.

"If I were only stronger!" he began.

"Wait," the little officer broke in. "I think I have it. I am expecting instructions from our headquarters at St. Trond—they should arrive at any moment—and I can send you back in the car which brings them. At headquarters they will be able to tell you something definite, and perhaps to help you."

He glanced anxiously toward the east, and then cast an appraising eye over the entrenchments his troops had dug. "We can hold them back for a time," he added, "but we need reinforcements badly. Ah, there comes the car!"

A powerful gray motor spun down the road from the west, kicking up a great cloud of dust, and in a moment the little captain had received his instructions. He tore the envelope open and read its contents eagerly. Then he turned to his men, his face shining.

"The Sixty-Third will be here in half an hour," he shouted. "We will give those fellows a hot dose this time!"

His men cheered the news with waving shakos, then, with a glance eastward, fell to work again on their trenches, which would have to be extended to accommodate the reinforcements. Their captain stepped close to the side of the purring car, and made his report to an officer who sat beside the driver. The two carried on a low-toned conversation. More than once they glanced at Stewart, and the conversation ended with a sharp nod from the officer in the car. The other came hurrying back to Stewart.

"It is all right," he said. "You will be at St. Trond in half an hour"; and he helped the American to mount into the tonneau.

For an instant Stewart stood there, staring back at the cloud of smoke above the burning village; then he dropped into the seat and turned to say good-by to the gallant fellow who had proved so true a friend. The Belgian captain was standing with heels together, head thrown back, hand at the vizor of his cap.

"*Monsieur!*" he said simply, as his eyes met Stewart's, and then the car started.

Stewart looked back and waved his hand to that martial little figure, so hopeful and indomitable. A mist of tears came before his eyes. Would he ever see that gallant friend again? Chance was all against it. An hour hence, the Belgian might be lying in the road, a bullet through his heart; if not an hour hence, then to-morrow or next day. And before this war was over, how many others would be lying so, their arms flung wide, their eyes staring at the sky—just as those young Germans had lain back yonder?

He thrust such thoughts away—they were too bitter, too terrible. But as his vision cleared, he saw on every hand the evidence of war's desolation.

The road was thronged with fugitives—old men, women, children—fleeing westward away from their ruined homes, away from the plague which was devastating their land. Their faces were vacant with despair or wet with silent tears. For whither could they flee? Where could they hope for food and shelter? How could their journey end, save at the goal of death?

The car threaded its way slowly among these heart-broken people. It passed through silent and deserted villages, by fields of grain that would never be harvested, along quiet streams which would soon be red with blood. At last it came to St. Trond, and stopped before the town hall, from whose beautiful old belfry floated the Belgian flag.

"If you will wait here, sir," said the officer, and jumped to the pavement and hurried up the steps.

So Stewart waited, an object of much curiosity to the passing crowd. Other cars dashed up from time to time, officers jumped out with reports, jumped in again with orders, and dashed away. Plainly Belgium was not dismayed, even in face of this great invasion; she was fighting coolly, intelligently, with her whole strength.

And then an officer came down the steps, jumped upon the foot-board of the machine, and looked at Stewart.

"I am told you have a message," he said.

"Yes."

"I am a member of the French staff. Can you deliver it to me?"

"I was told to deliver it only to General Joffre."

"Ah! In that case—"

The officer caught his lower lip between the thumb and little finger of his left hand, as if in perplexity. So naturally was it done that for an instant Stewart did not recognize the sign; then, hastily, he passed his left hand across his eyes.

The officer looked at him keenly.

"Have we not met before?" he asked.

"In Berlin, on the 22nd," Stewart answered.

The officer's face cleared, and he stepped over the door into the tonneau.

"I am at your service, sir," he said.

"First you must rest a little, and have some clean clothes and a bath and food. I can see that you have had a hard time. Then we will start."

An hour later, more comfortable in body than it had seemed possible he could ever be again, Stewart lay back among the deep cushions of a high-powered car which whizzed southward along a pleasant road. He did not know his destination. He had not inquired, and indeed he did not care; but had he known Belgium, he would have recognized Landen and Ramillies; he would have known that those high white cliffs ahead bordered the Meuse; he would have seen that this pinnacled town they were approaching was Namur.

The car was stopped at the city gate by a sentry, and taken to the town hall, where the chauffeur's papers were examined and verified. Then they were off again, across the river and straight southward, close beside its western bank.

Stewart had never seen a more beautiful country. The other shore was closed in by towering, rugged cliffs, with a white villa here and there, squeezed in between wall and water, or perched on a high ledge. Sometimes the cliffs gave back to make room for a tiny, red-roofed village; again they were riven by great fissures or pitted with yawning chasms.

Evening came, and still the car sped southward. There were no evidences here

of war. As the calm stars came out one by one, Stewart could have fancied that it was all a dream but for that dull agony of the spirit which he felt would never leave him, and for that strand of lustrous hair which now lay warm above his heart—and which, alas, was all he had of her!

Yes, there were the two letters which rustled under his fingers as he thrust them into his pocket. He had looked at them more than once during the afternoon, delighting to handle them because they had been hers, imagining that he could detect on them the faint, subtle aroma of her presence.

He had turned them over and over, had slipped out the sheets of closely written paper, and had read them through and through, hoping for some clue to the identity of the woman he had lost. It was an added anguish that he did not even know her name! The letters did not help him. They contained nothing but innocent, careless, light-hearted, impersonal gossip, written apparently by one young woman to another. "My dear cousin," they were addressed, and Stewart could have wept at the irony which denied him even her first name.

They were in English—excellent English—and the envelopes bore the superscription, "Mrs. Bradford Stewart, Spa, Province of Liège, Belgium." But so far as he could see they had nothing to do with her—they were just a part of the elaborate plot in which he had been unwittingly entangled.

But what secret could they contain? A code? If so, it must be a very perfect one, for nothing could be more simple, more direct, more unaffected, than the letters themselves. A swift doubt swept over him. Perhaps, once in the presence of the general, he would find that he had played the fool—that there was nothing in these letters.

And yet a woman had risked her life for them. Face to face with death, she had made him swear to deliver them. Well, he would keep his oath.

He was still very tired, and at last he lay back among the cushions, closed his eyes, and tried to sleep.

"*Halte là!*" cried a sharp voice.

The brakes squeaked and groaned as they were jammed down. Stewart sat up and looked about him. Ahead gleamed

the lights of a town; he could hear a train rumbling past along the river-bank.

There was a moment's colloquy between the chauffeur and a man in uniform; a paper was examined by the light of an electric torch; then the man stepped to one side and the car started slowly ahead.

The rumbling train came to a stop, and Stewart, rubbing his eyes, saw a regiment of soldiers leaping from it down to a long, brilliantly lighted platform. They wore red trousers and long blue coats folded back in front.

With a shock Stewart realized that they were French—that these were the men who were soon to face those gray-clad legions back yonder. Then, above the door of the station, its name flashed into view—"Givet." They had passed the frontier—they were in France.

The car rolled on, crossed the river by a long bridge, and finally came to a stop before a great, barnlike building, every window of which blazed with light. Streams of officers were constantly arriving and departing. A sentry leaped upon the foot-board; again the chauffeur produced his papers. An officer was summoned, who glanced at the document, and immediately stepped back and threw open the door of the tonneau.

"This way, sir, if you please," he said to Stewart.

As the latter rose heavily, stiff with long sitting, the Frenchman held out an arm and helped him to alight.

"You are very tired, is it not so?" he asked.

He led the way up the steps, along a hall, and into a long room where many persons were sitting on benches against the walls or slowly walking up and down.

"You will wait here," added the guide. "It will not be long"; and he hurried away.

Stewart dropped upon a bench and looked about him. There were a few women in the room—and he wondered at their presence there—but most of its occupants were men, some in uniform, others in civilian dress of the most diverse kinds, of all grades of society. Stewart was struck at once by the fact that they were all silent, exchanging not a word, not even a glance. Each kept his eyes to himself as if it was a point of honor so to do.

Suddenly Stewart understood. These were agents of the secret service, waiting

to report to their chief, or to be assigned to some difficult and dangerous task. One by one they were summoned, disappeared through the door, and did not return.

At last it was to Stewart the messenger came.

"This way, sir," he said.

Stewart followed him out into the hall, and into a little room beyond a deep ante-chamber, where a white-haired man sat before a great table covered with papers. The messenger stood aside for Stewart to pass, then went swiftly out and closed the door.

The man at the table examined his visitor with a long and penetrating glance, his face cold, impassive, expressionless.

"You are not one of ours," he said at last.

"No, I am an American."

"And yet you have a message?"

"Yes."

"How came you by it?"

"It was entrusted to me by one of your agents, who joined me at Aix-la-Chapelle."

A sudden flame of excitement blazed into the cold eyes.

"May I ask your name?"

"Bradford Stewart."

The man snatched up a memorandum from the desk and glanced at it. Then he sprang to his feet.

"Your pardon, Mr. Stewart," he said.

"I did not catch your name—or, if I did, my brain did not supply the connection, as it should have done. My only excuse is that I have so many things to think of. Pray sit down." He drew up a chair. "Where is the person who joined you at Aix?"

"I fear that she is dead," answered Stewart in a low voice.

"Dead!" echoed the other, visibly and deeply moved. "Dead! But no, that cannot be!" He passed his hand feverishly before his eyes. "I will hear your story presently; first, the message. It is a written one?"

"Yes, in the form of two letters."

"May I see them?"

Stewart hesitated.

"I promised to deliver them only to General Joffre," he explained.

"I understand; but the general is very busy. I must see the letters for a moment before I ask him for an audience."

Without a word Stewart passed them over. He saw the flush of excitement with

which the other looked at them; he saw how his hand trembled as he drew out the sheets, glanced at them, thrust them hastily back, and touched a button on his desk.

Instantly the door opened and the messenger appeared.

"Ask General Joffre if he can see me for a moment on a matter of the first importance," said the man. The messenger bowed and withdrew. "Yes, of the first importance," he added, turning to Stewart, with shining eyes. "Here are the letters—I will not deprive you, sir, of the pleasure of yourself placing them in our general's hands. And it is to him you shall tell your story."

The door opened and the messenger appeared.

"The general will be pleased to receive *monsieur* at once," he said, and stood aside for them to pass.

At the end of the hall was a large room crowded with officers. Beyond this was a smaller room where six men, each with his secretary, sat around a long table. At its head sat a plump little man, with white hair and bristling white mustache, which contrasted strongly with a face darkened and reddened by exposure to wind and rain, and lighted by a pair of eyes incredibly bright.

He looked up as Stewart and his companion entered.

"Well, Fernande?" he said. Stewart did not know till afterward that his companion was the famous head of the French Intelligence Department, the eyes and ears of the French army—captain of an army of his own, every member of which went daily in peril of a dreadful death.

"General," said Fernande, in a voice whose trembling earnestness caused every man present suddenly to raise his head, "I have the pleasure of introducing to you an American, Mr. Bradford Stewart, who, at great peril to himself, has brought you a message of the first importance."

General Joffre bowed.

"I am pleased to meet Mr. Stewart," he said. "What is this message?"

"It is in these letters, sir," said Stewart, and placed the envelopes in his hand.

The general glanced at them, then slowly drew out the enclosures.

"We shall need a candle," said Fernande; "also a flat dish of water."

One of the secretaries hastened away to get the needed articles. He was back in

a moment, and Fernande, having lighted the candle, took from his waistcoat-pocket a tiny vial of blue liquid and dropped three drops into the dish.

"Now we are ready, gentlemen," he said. "You are about to witness a very interesting experiment."

He picked up one of the sheets, dipped it into the water, then held it against the flame of the candle. Stewart, watching curiously, saw a multitude of red lines leap out upon the sheet—lines which zigzagged this way and that.

As sheet followed sheet, the whole staff crowded around the head of the table, snatching them up, holding them to the light, bending close to decipher minute writing. Their eyes were shining with excitement, their hands were trembling; they spoke in broken words.

"The *enclinte*—oh, a new work here at the left—I thought so—three emplacements—but this wall is simply a mask—it would present no difficulties—that position could be flanked—"

It was the general himself who spoke the final word.

"This is the weak spot," he said, his finger upon the last sheet of all. Then he turned to Stewart, his eyes gleaming. "*Monsieur*," he said, "I will not conceal from you that these papers are, as Fernande has said, of the very first importance. Will you tell us how they came into your possession?"

As briefly as might be, Stewart told the story—the meeting at Aix, the arrest at Herbesthal, the flight over the hills, the passage of the Meuse, the attack on the village. At the end his voice faltered despite his effort to control it.

At first the staff had kept on with its examination of the plans, but first one and then another laid them down and sat and listened. For a moment after he had finished they sat silent, regarding him. Then General Joffre rose slowly to his feet, and the members of his staff rose with him.

"*Monsieur*," he said, "I will not attempt to tell you how your words have moved me; but on behalf of France I thank you; on her behalf I give you the highest honor which it is in my power to bestow." His hand went to his button-hole and detached a red ribbon, from which hung a little five-rayed star of white enamel, edged with gold. In a moment he had affixed it to Stewart's coat. "The

Legion, *monsieur!*" he said, and he stepped back and saluted.

Stewart, a mist of tears before his eyes, his throat suddenly contracted, looked down at the decoration.

"It is too much," he protested brokenly. "I do not deserve—"

"It is the proudest order in the world, *monsieur*," broke in the general, "but it is not too much. You have done for France a greater thing than you perhaps imagine. Is there anything else that I can do for you? If there is, I pray you to command me."

Stewart felt himself shaken by a sudden convulsive trembling.

"If I could get some news," he murmured brokenly, "of—of my little comrade."

General Joffre shot him a quick glance. His face softened, grew tender with comprehension.

"Fernande," he said.

Fernande bowed.

"Everything possible shall be done, my general," he said. "I promise it. We shall not be long without tidings."

"Thank you," said Stewart. "That is all, I think."

"And you?"

"I? Oh, what does it matter?" And then he turned, fired by a sudden remembrance of a great white tent, of loaded ambulances. "Yes, there is something I might do. I am a surgeon. Will France accept my services?"

"She is honored to do so," said the general quickly. "I will see that it is done. Until to-morrow—I will expect you"; and he held out his hand, while the staff came to a stiff salute.

"Until to-morrow," repeated Stewart.

He followed Fernande to the door. As he passed out he glanced behind him. The members of the staff were bending above those red-lined sheets, their faces shining with eagerness.

The officers in the outer room, catching sight of the gold-rimmed star, saluted as he passed; the sentry in the hall came stiffly to attention.

But Stewart's heart was bitter. Honor! Glory! What were they worth to him, alone and desolate?

"*Monsieur!*" It was Fernande's voice, low, vibrant with sympathy. "You will pardon me for what I am about to say, but I think I understand. It was not alone

for France you did this thing—it was for that 'little comrade,' as you have called her, so brave, so loyal, so indomitable that my heart is at her feet. Is it not so?"

He came a step nearer, and laid a tender hand on Stewart's arm.

"Do not despair, I beg of you, my friend. She is not dead—it is impossible that she should be dead! Fate could not be so cruel. With her you shared a few splendid days of peril, of trial, and of ecstasy; then you were whirled apart, but only for a time. Somewhere, some time, you will find her again, awaiting you. I know it, I feel it!"

But it was no longer Fernande that Stewart heard—it was another voice, subtle, delicate, out of the unknown. His bosom lifted with a deep, convulsive breath.

"You are right," he whispered. "I, too, feel it! Some time, somewhere—"

And his trembling fingers sought that tress of lustrous hair, warm above his heart.

Far away to the east, a sentry in the gray uniform of the German army paced slowly back and forth before a great white house looking across a terraced garden down upon the Meuse. Three days before it had been the beautiful and orderly home of a wealthy Belgian; now it reeked with the odor of ether and iodoform. In the spacious dining-room an operating-table had been installed, and a sterilizing apparatus simmered in one corner. Along its halls and in every room rows of white cots were ranged—and each cot had its bandaged occupant.

Before the door, two surgeons, thoroughly weary after a hard day, sat smoking and talking in low tones. Within, a white-clad nurse stole from cot to cot, assuring herself that all was as well as might be.

In a tiny room on the upper floor a single cot had been placed. As the nurse stopped at the open door and held aloft her night-lamp, her eyes caught the gleam of other eyes, and she stepped quickly forward.

"What is it?" she asked softly. "Why are you not asleep? You are not in pain?"

The patient—a slender lad, seemingly, or could it be a girl?—smiled and made a negative sign.

"I do not know German," he—or she—said in French.

The nurse placed her cool hand upon

the patient's brow to assure herself that there was no access of fever.

"I speak French a little," she said painfully, in that language. And then she hesitated. "Tell me, *fräulein*," she went on, after a moment, "how you came to be wounded. We have wondered much."

"My brother and I were trying to get through your lines to Brussels, where our mother is," the other answered. "I slipped on a suit of my brother's clothes, thinking to make better progress; but we were too late. We were caught between two fires when your men stormed that village."

Despite the smile, there was a shimmer of anxiety in the eyes she turned upon the nurse. It was a poor story, but she had been able to devise no better one. The nurse, at least, accepted it unquestioningly.

"Ach, how terrible!" she commented. "And your brother—what of him?"

"When I was wounded, he carried me into a house, and then hastened away to summon aid. Before he could get back, your men had taken the village."

"Then he is safe, at least?"

"Yes, I am sure of it."

"And he will come for you, of course, as soon as he can?"

"Yes, I am sure of that also!"

THE END

There was a subtle timbre in the voice that caught the nurse's ear, and she looked down again into the luminous eyes.

"You do not seem to mind your misfortune," she said. "You seem even happy!"

The eyes which gazed up at her were softly, wonderfully brilliant. A deeper color crept into the pale cheeks.

"I am happy," said the girl, almost in a whisper; "very happy!"

The nurse paused a moment longer, strangely thrilled. Then her training asserted itself.

"You must not excite yourself," she cautioned. "You must go to sleep. Good night."

"Good night!" came the murmured answer. "I will try to sleep."

But for long and long she lay staring up into the darkness, glowing with the precious memory of a man's strong arms about her, his ardent lips on hers.

"He is safe!" her soul assured her.

"He will seek you up and down the world until he finds you. You shall lie again upon his breast; you shall hear his heart beating—some time, somewhere!"

And with a long sigh of contentment, she closed her eyes and slept.

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